Fixing Meaning: Intertextuality, Inferencing and Genre in Interpretation

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Abstract

The intertextual theories of V. N. Voloshinov, Mikhail Bakhtin and the early Julia Kristeva provide the most convincing account of the processes of textual production, conceived as constitutively social, cultural and historical. However, the ways in which intertextual accounts of reading (or 'use') have extended such theories have foreclosed their potential. In much contemporary literary and cultural theory, it is assumed that reading, conceived intertextually, is no simple decoding process, but there is little interest in what interpretation, as a process, is, and its relations to reading. It is these questions which this thesis seeks to answer. The introduction sets the scene both for the problem and its methodological treatment: drawing certain post-structuralist and pragmatic theories of meaning into confrontation, and producing a critical synthesis. Part one (chapters one to three) elaborate these two traditions of meaning and stages the encounter. Chapter one offers detailed expositions of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, contrasting these with other intertextual theories of production and reception. Chapter two examines inferential accounts of communication within pragmatics, focusing on Paul Grice and on Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's Relevance theory. Chapter three stages an encounter between these radically different traditions. A common ground is identified: both are *rhetorical* approaches to meaning, focusing on the relations between texts, contexts and their producers and interpreters. Each tradition is then subjected to the theoretical scrutiny of the other. Inferential theories expose the lack of specificity in intertextual accounts which completely ignore inferencing as a process. Intertextual theories reveal that text and context have semantically substantive intertextual dimensions, most particularly genre and register (conceived intertextually) which are ignored by inferential theories. Text and context are therefore far more semantically fixed than such theories suppose. Both traditions ignore the role of production practices other than 'speech' or 'writing', i.e. they ignore how *publishing* practices - editing, design, production and marketing - constitute genre and shape reading. In Part Two (chapters four to six), the critique is developed into an account of interpretation. Interpretation, conceived intertextually, is significantly, though not exclusively, inferential, but inferential processes do not 'work' in the ways proposed by existing

inferential theories. Patterns of inference are ordered by the relations between discourses (in Foucault's sense) and genres in the text, the reader's knowledge and the conditions of reading. Chapter four elaborates the concepts required for such an account of interpretation, centring on the role of publishing processes and the text's material form in shaping interpretation. The limits of existing accounts of the edition and publishing, specifically Gérard Genette's *Paratexts* and work in the 'new' textual studies, call for a more expansive account of how publishing shapes genre and interpretation. Chapters five and six develop two case-studies which extend these concepts and arguments. These examine two contemporary publishing categories: 'classics' (Penguin, Everyman etc.) and literary theory textbooks (Introductions and Readers). Through the detailed analyses of particular editions, I develop and substantiate a stronger and richer account of interpretation as process and practice and its relation to reading. This is expanded in the final chapter.

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PART TWO

Introduction

1. Reading, interpretation and intertextuality

Early in *Emma*, the heroine surmises (quite correctly it turns out) that her new friend, Harriet Smith, has a taking for a young farmer. Eager to draw her out, Emma questions Harriet about her acquaintance. Harriet is unaware of the intentions that lie behind her friend's enquiries. What appear to be requests for information - 'what sort of looking man is Mr Martin?' and so forth - are also speech acts of a very different kind. But the question which takes priority - it is the first question Emma poses, and the most important - is not about his age or his looks:

> 'Mr Martin, I suppose, is not a man of information beyond the line of his own business. He does not read?'
>
> 'Oh yes! - that is, no - I do not know - but I believe he has read a good deal but not what you would think anything of. He reads the *Agricultural Reports* and some other books that lay in one of the window seats - but he reads all *them* to himself. But sometimes of an evening before we went to cards, he would read something aloud out of the *Elegant Extracts* - very entertaining. And I know he has read *The Vicar of Wakefield.* He never read *The Romance of the Forest*, nor *The Children of the Abbey.* He had never heard of such books before I mentioned them, but he is determined to get them now as soon as he can.'[1]

Harriet's reply is a masterpiece of confusion and clarity. He does read and he doesn't read, she doesn't 'know' but she has clear evidence that he can and does (she has seen him, stronger, she has heard him). Yet, in the process of this baffling and baffled reply it also become abundantly clear that Robert Martin is a model reader: first, he reads both aloud and silently and second, his reading is, in the strongest possible sense 'improving'.[2] Just as the *Agricultural Reports* help provide him with the means to improve the land that he works for Mr Knightley (he is also a model tenant), so too *The Vicar of Wakefield* contributes to his moral improvement (and to that of his audience). The fact that he has not read the popular novels that Harriet enjoys is also a positive. And although his infatuation with her encourages him to profess a desire to read them, it soon becomes clear that this is not a priority: another mark in his favour.[3]

Harriet's reply above all marks a confusion about what is meant by 'reading'. Imbricated in the social and ethical dynamics of the everyday, and an index of these, reading is clearly more than a 'mere' technical competence, although this too may be a social and ethical marker. Harriet intimates that what Emma means by reading is not (only) a technical skill (though what Emma means is itself unclear). He may have read 'a good deal' but not anything Emma 'would think anything of'. What is read is sharply foregrounded in the confusing clarity of the answer. Emma, here and

elsewhere, 'misreads' the evidence that Robert Martin provides, as she misreads much else. And *Emma* has been classified as a novel about 'reading' (and misreading).[4] In 'Feminism, New Historicism and the Reader', Wai-Chee Dimock invokes Stephen Marcus's writings about the city to suggest that reading 'might be said to be a phenomenon peculiar to modernity'.[5] The reading she has is mind is 'non-generic', reading 'in the broadest sense of the word', 'having to do with the interpretation of signs, the adjudication of meanings, and the construction of reality'.[6] It is this type of reading that is suggested by the classification of *Emma* as a novel about reading. This notion of reading, reading as a distinctive practice of modernity, seems to sit uneasily with the other, apparently more simple definition: reading as a competence and component of literacy.

In 1999, two British soap operas introduced story-lines which focused on the effects of adult illiteracy.[7] In each case, illiteracy was a shameful secret that the character had hidden from friends and close family members, perfectly in accord with the Gothic current that runs so strongly through such dramas. In each case the character's confession or 'coming out' paved the way to the solution of adult literacy classes.[8] Although both stories emphasised the damaging psychological effects of secret illiteracy and the prejudices shared by literate and illiterate, they also locked into a narrative of progress that makes literacy a marker of 'development' and modernity. This is the 'same' literacy that functions as an OECD indicator, along with average infant mortality and death rates. Here, of course, the progress was individual. In *Brookside*, a possible promotion, emerging out of a re-structuring, was the catalyst to a crisis which threatened exposure and sacking; in *Hollyoaks*, the character - a recent school leaver with no educational qualifications - had little or no likelihood of employment or progress.

The 'simple' sense of reading as literacy is not simple at all. These two senses of reading - functional competence and practice of distinction - are only superficially ignorant of one another. As many recent histories of literacy illustrate, being able to read or write is never conceived exclusively as a pedagogically transferable technical competence, but always imbricated in discourses and arguments about progress, the practices of politics, the meanings of culture and above all authority.[9] The social, political and cultural complexity of literacy can perhaps be most simply illustrated by the Chomskyan derived definition of a 'general' linguistic capability: being able to generate an infinite number of well-formed sentences. This formulation is of little or no help if you want to define either reading or writing. To be able to read does not mean that you can read anything; to be able to write likewise. Capable of both reading and writing, we read a far greater variety of texts than we ever write.

If reading is never only a functional competence, nor is it ever singular. I will argue in this thesis that reading always encompasses three interrelated processes. The

first of these is interpretation, the ways in which readers assign meanings to texts, those procedures which seek to answer the question what does this text or text-fragment mean? Second, reading always also involves explanation: most simply, the ways in which we account for why a text means what it means. Third, reading includes a dimension of evaluation, a judgement or assessment of the text's value. It is the processes of interpretation which are the central focus of this thesis. Much more will be said about the interpretative process and its relations with the explanation and evaluation, and likewise about the many forms that interpretation, explanation and evaluation can take in particular situations of reading. But this focus on the interpretative process, as one of the processes of reading, stems from a dissatisfaction with some of the more extended and generic claims that have been made about reading 'in the broadest sense of the word'. The interpretations and interpretative processes I am concerned with are almost all linguistic which sets one obvious limit. But beyond this, it is, I will argue, counter-productive to define reading as expansively as Dimock to encompass 'the construction of reality'. In the attempt to secure reading as a definitively social and cultural process, the specificity of reading and the processes it encompasses can easily get lost.

Above, I proposed the beginnings of 'readings' of a fragment from a novel and a shared storyline in two popular tv dramas. I treated Harriet's utterance as a signifier of character, and one interpretation of her utterance is that she is confused or, more brutally, stupid. After all, either Robert Martin can read or he can't. Another interpretation, congruent with the first but not necessarily dependent upon it, is that Harriet's utterance reveals her to be pulled in opposing directions by conflicting desires. 'Oh yes!': her admiration of Mr Martin drives her to correct the implicit criticism in Emma's question. But Harriet is also impressed by her new friend, and certain of her superiority; whatever and however Martin reads it will not impress Emma: 'not what you would think anything of.' Both these interpretations rely on an identification of characters as categories in fictional texts and on certain knowledges of how characters function and are represented. The first 'knows' that in novels, the manner in which characters speak frequently signifies or provides evidence of some other characteristic(s). This knowledge could be said to explain the interpretation, but we can also see that the explanation in some sense precedes it: the interpretation can only be produced with this knowledge. The interpretation may be attached to a particular evaluation of it as a novelistic utterance. There is, after all, a long tradition which admires 'show' over 'tell' and views it is as a marker of compositional ability. Enter the author. But, like explanation, evaluation also precedes interpretation, and the relations between the three are clearly complex. The second interpretation also relies on a concept of character but of a somewhat different kind. We need to know that the direct speech of characters in novels not only functions to represent their traits but that

such speech also represents character relations, that there are always dynamics at play when characters interact verbally (or in other ways); and also perhaps that language and narrative articulate conflict and desire. Enter psychoanalysis. This interpretation could also be linked to a judgement, an evaluation, of the same show and tell type as above. What interests me is first the kinds of knowledge that are deployed in such operations. Both interpretations of Harriet's utterance rely on a concept of character which belongs to discourses about fiction and drama. These are not individual 'factual' items which form a part of some highly general knowledge, but a particular set of concepts, arguments and assumptions: a discourse which forms part of the already-written. This example in particular foregrounds the textual character of knowledge. Second, why are certain concepts mobilised in particular acts of interpretation and reading, and not others? The discussion of *Emma* neglects to mention genre. This may be perfectly reasonable: a few lines may not provide interesting or conclusive generic markers. But the immediate classification of the soap opera story-lines as Gothic suggests that both readings are informed by a set of assumptions about the literary and the mass which mobilise very different concepts and reading practices. I described Harriet's utterance as a 'masterpiece' of confusion and clarity: character confusion clearly, but what kind of clarity? The fact that this is direct speech makes any easy appeal to a 'narrator' somewhat difficult. Harriet's reply, above all, seems to inscribe the presence of an author, who articulates through 'Harriet's' language of confusion another language: a discourse which, despite the chaos of its logic, is formally harmonious and from which emerges the model reader. Such a reading relies on a set of concepts about compositional practice, and finally on a concept of author as originator and producer of meaning. Soap opera, by contrast, appears to be anonymous and it is genre which organises meaning: the literacy storyline makes sense within and is ordered by the Gothic structure. What also emerges are the complex and, perhaps, non-obvious relations between the three modalities of reading. Interpretation, explanation, and evaluation seems to be a logical sequence: only when we know what it means do we start to think about why; only when this too is answered do we address questions of value. But the example above immediately suggests that such a sequence of operations is by no means necessary. Explanatory and evaluative processes may well precede interpretation, providing the concepts that interpretation draws on. To theorise the interpretative process therefore requires both the delineation of highly specific procedures - about the mobilisation and deployment (or not) of particular knowledges for example - and their situation within the dynamics of reading as a whole.

The readings above indicate some of the ways in which reading and more specifically, interpretation, are intertextual; in particular, how textual knowledges are central to interpretative processes. And this thesis aims to theorise interpretation within

a model of language and its practice as intertextual. If reading and increasingly re-reading is a privileged signifier in many contemporary intellectual discourses about culture, then intertextuality is scarcely less so. Indeed 'intertextuality', a term and concept which originated in a highly specific domain of theoretical discourse has, like 'deconstruction', metabolised and metamorphosed beyond intellectual and academic writing into broadsheet culture. This may be supremely appropriate: that the concept of writing as re-writing or re-reading should itself be subject to the very process it theorises. But this process of multiple re-appropriation is also, as I will show below, problematic.

Specifically then, this thesis seeks to theorise interpretation as an intertextual process. I would immediately and readily acknowledge that this aim is not original. Questions about the relations between interpretation, or, more usually the broader generality of reading, and intertextuality abound, as do answers. It is frequently assumed that interpretation is an intertextual process. This 'novelty-deficit' can be posed in far stronger terms: do such questions still have the status of questions? Not surprisingly (this being the very beginning), my answer to the first question is yes; and my purpose in this introduction is to explain why this is (still) so. Further, I will argue that the common assumption that interpretation (or reading) is intertextual frequently forecloses the possibility of theorising the ways in which it is or might be, in particular a specifying of the process itself. Below I will substantiate these claims, discussing four accounts of intertextual reception which are, in different ways, representative of the range and scope of work which draws on the concept of intertextuality to theorise interpretation or reading. I will then go on to address the strengths of such accounts but also a set of problems which these accounts (and those which they 'represent'), individually and jointly share, a set of problems which in turn suggest a very different line of theoretical enquiry. In line with this, the definition of intertextuality offered at this point is deliberately loose: a conception of cultural production as the variation and/or transformation of extant signifying practices. This definition is broad enough to encompass the various accounts which follow. I use 'intertextuality' simply because it has become the preferred term for such theories across a range of fields and disciplines. I will also use the terms 'reading' or 'reception' and not interpretation in much of the discussion below as these accounts conceive the process in broader terms than the sense specified above.

2. Intertextuality as departure: Roland Barthes

Barthes's formulations of the relations between intertextuality and reading are perhaps the best known. In a cluster of texts originally published between 1968 and 1973, Barthes elaborates a concept of the text as intertextuality and binds this redefinition to a

rethinking of a number of other concepts - author, scriptor, reading, writing, reader - in terms which challenge both the 'myths' of Literature and the aims and practices of high structuralism.[10] Barthes defines the intertextual text on a number of occasions in these writings, but perhaps the most succinct formulation occurs in 'The Death of the Author': ... 'a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash.'[11] This is immediately suggestive about the processes of reading, which must be able to handle both the plural that the text is, and the conflicts that arise between the various writings that constitute it. But Barthes conceives a more intimate relation between text, conceived as a process of production and reading:

> What I tried to begin in *S/Z* was a kind of identification of the notions of writing and reading. I wanted to squash the two together ... Once again, the problem is not to move from writing to reading, or from literature to reading, or from the author to the reader: the problem, as we said earlier, is one of the transformation of the object, of the changing of the level of perception - writing and reading must be conceived, worked, defined, r e-defined together ... It is necessary therefore to *block* the two notions, we need to put together, to make one single block of the notions of writing and reading.[12]

The desire to 'squash' reading and writing together, 'to make one single block' of the two makes it very difficult to specify a Barthesian account of reading. Barthes is not, I would argue, proposing a collapsing of the two which would perhaps make the task of such an elucidation easier: if reading was writing and vice versa, then any account of writing would simultaneously, also, be, or could function as, an account of reading. But the 'squashing' retains the notions of reading and writing even though the boundaries between the two become difficult to decipher. That said, these texts have ~~been~~ frequently been read as a dissolution of the distinction, and *S/Z* in particular, has often been annexed and celebrated as an account of intertextual reading; 'the most sustained yet pulverised meditation on reading I know in all of Western critical literature' writes Richard Howard, in the note on *S/Z* which prefaces the English translation.[13] And as I will show below, formulating reading as writing or re-writing, and dissolving one into the other has become one of the key features of most intertextual theories of reception.

Barthes's clearest statement about reading takes the form of an extended metaphor which characterises the reader as a stroller on the side of a valley:

> ... [W]hat he perceives is multiple, irreducible, coming from a disconnected, heterogeneous variety of substances and perspectives: lights, colours, vegetation, heat, air, slender explosions of noises, scant cries of birds, children's voices, from over on the other side, passages, gestures, clothes of inhabitants near or far away. All these *incidents* are half-identifiable: they come from codes which are known but their combination is unique.[14]

This metaphor suggests the 'innumerable centres' from which meaning issues, centres which cannot be sourced (this would be to 'fall in with the myth of filiation').[15] The text as intertextuality is an 'irreducible plural' but this plurality is not liberal: 'it is not a question of conceding some meanings, of magnanimously acknowledging that each one has its share of truth.'[16] The meanings of a text are multiple and conflictual (the text is a space where writings 'clash'), and meaning is never either revealed or resolved. The reader's experience of meaning is both familiar and unfamiliar, there is repetition but also the particular variation of this text. The reader is also characterised as the centre through and around which meanings echo but the metaphor also suggests that reading requires a certain distance: many of these sounds issue from 'the other side'.[17] The stroller-reader is not a participant in a conventional communicative exchange: reading is a distracted activity but distraction is not diversion but an active and watchful process.[18]

The title concepts 'Work' and 'Text' are also suggestive of reading practices. Within this essay the sense of 'Text' shifts.[19] It is first a term for an extant form of writing, of which modernism is the prime exemplar; but Text or Writing (Ecriture) is also an ontological category: it is the reality which underlies all textual production, it is what the Work and all the institutions which support it (and in particular the practices of filiation), resist ('Work' has a similarly dual sense in this essay). This double sense is perhaps suggestive of what an 'ideal' Barthesian reading practice might be: a 'disentangling' of the text's multiple threads rather than a 'deciphering' of the meaning reputed to lie beneath, a mode of reading which is both the consequence of intertextuality and a resistance to reading as decipherment and resolution.[20]

3. Structuralist intertextuality: Michael Riffaterre

> ... [W]hen it activates or mobilises the intertext, the text leaves little leeway to readers and controls closely their response.[21]

Riffaterre's insistence here on the 'mandatory' character of interpretation is general, and strongly marked in the title of the text cited above: 'Compulsory Reader Response: the Intertextual Drive'.[22] Whilst Barthes's accounts of intertextuality may well be the most familiar, fixing it definitively as a post-structuralist concept, Riffaterre's model of intertextual reading is worth recalling as its other: the un-representative. Like Gérard Genette, whose work will be discussed in chapter four, Riffaterre has formulated a structuralist model of intertextual reception. Central to his account of the interpretative imperatives of the text are the distinctions he draws between text and

intertext, and intertext and intertextuality. The intertext is 'one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its overall significance.' Intertextuality is defined as 'the web of functions that constitutes and regulates the relationships between text and intertext.'[23] The intertext is the key to the work's 'overall significance' but it is not directly present in the text. Rather the intertext is symptomatically present - 'the intertext is to the text what the unconscious is to the conscious' - marked as a moment of disruption in the process of mimetic decoding that Riffaterre conceives as the default mode of reading.[24] These disruptions also mark the presence of another code, the poetic, and call for a corresponding mode of reading: poetic decoding. In 'Compulsory Reader Response', as elsewhere, Riffaterre characterises these anomalies as markers or indices of interpretative problems which simultaneously propose clues to a solution.[25] What is crucial is the difference between text and intertext: the difference drives the reader to construct a relation between the two, to find the key that will unlock the poetic code which created the initial disturbance. This key, variously named in Riffaterre's writings as 'matrix', 'hypotext' and 'hypogram', and which Riffaterre conceives as the intertextual variant of Peirce's 'interpretant', is the means or rule by which the various anomalies of the text, now revealed to be systematic, can be resolved.[26] The difference between intertext and text enables the reader to identify the hypogram or rule which transforms the intertext - defined as cultural convention - into the literary. This account of the role of the intertext is clearly structured by a Formalist definition: the search for the intertext is prompted by the 'perceptual' challenge that the poetic poses. Likewise, the Formalist valuing of the transformation of established norms

> [I]ntertextuality enables the text to represent, at one and the same time, the following pairs of opposites (within each of which the first item corresponds to the intertext): convention and departures from it, tradition and novelty, sociolect and idiolect, the already-said and its negation or transformation.[27]

Riffaterre's account of the relations between intertext and text therefore both situate the literary within the generality of culture and also distinguish it as the transformation of that generality.

4. Intertextuality as context: Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott

Whilst Riffaterre is concerned with the specificity of the literary, and Barthes with the myths of literary reading, Bennett and Woollacott's interest lies in theorising popular reading. In *Bond and Beyond: The Political Career of a Popular Hero*, they develop an account of 'inter-textual' reading through a detailed study of the novels, films and other discourses surrounding the production and reception of 'the texts of (James) Bond'.[28]

'Inter-textuality' is a determinate set of textual relations or situations which organise specific readings of a text. An educational curriculum, a mode of cultural classification (authorial, generic, historic), a film season, for example, can all operate as inter-textualities within specific conditions of reading.[29] This immediately suggests the central role of context in intertextual reading or interpretation. In their study, the focus is the different inter-textual locations that have constituted and reconstituted the multiple meanings and values of the Bond texts from the late fifties up to the mid-eighties. Whilst in Britain, the early novels were read by a working-class male readership through the inter-textual lens of the imperial spy thriller, in America, it was hard-boiled detective fiction which provided the framework of expectations for an equivalent reading constituency.[30] Bennett and Woollacott use the term 'reading formation' to describe inter-textual processes which 'co-produce' both text and reader.[31] It is, predominantly, educational and media institutions and practices which produce the inter-textual relations which in turn shape or 'produce' texts and readers. The inter-textual perspective of the imperial spy thriller, for example, 'cues' the Bond novels in particular ways but also activates specific expectations and fields of reference.

Bennett and Woollacott's 'inter-textual' is developed as a critical intervention in existing accounts of text-reader relations. The 'inter-textual' challenges the intertextual. According to them, 'intertextuality' identifies a 'system of references' as resident in the text, a theoretical error, which is shared, it seems, by nearly all models of text-reader relations.[32] Accounts of the implied, preferred or model reader who is positioned and indeed constructed by the text and diverse work on audiences - David Morley's *The Nationwide Audience* , Laura Mulvey's account of the gendered psychodynamics of spectatorship, Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding model and Umberto Eco's account of naive and sophisticated readers - all make the same mistake. All 'retain intact the virtual identity of the text in the respect that when all is said and done such variations are conceived as merely different responses to the "same" text'.[33] By contrast, the concept of inter-textuality explodes the concept of a text that pre-exists any reading of it, or a reader, actual or 'textual' who pre-exists its reading: text and reader 'co-produce' each other. Bennett and Woollacott do not deny the existence of certain determinate objective properties in texts, such as narrative patterns, but argue that these are subordinate to the inter-textualities of reading.[34] Bennett and Woollacott's development of inter-textuality is an attempt to formulate a concept of popular reading which is in turn part of a more general critique of certain Marxist approaches (although 'Marxist' is in this context formulated in very general terms, the reference to 'the culture industry' suggests Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer) which, they argue, treat mass culture as a mere container for ideologies which the majority of readers (or consumers) simply ingest.[35] Bennett and Woollacott insist on the ways in which ideologies of gender, sexuality and nation are transformed through the processes of cultural production and

reception of Bond texts. 'Inter-textuality' is therefore both a challenge to the fixed or, as they term it, 'metaphysical' text and to a specific variety of this within definitions and treatments of the popular.

5. Intertextuality as assumption: Roger Chartier

The concept of intertextuality and its relations with reading is less explicit in Chartier's writing than in the accounts outlined above. Intertextuality is, in the main, an assumption which underwrites particular concepts of culture and cultural production. This however is exactly what makes Chartier's work representative, as will be discussed below. Intertextuality is also pivotal to his own recent work about reading, and to his broadly defined project: to reconfigure intellectual history with a re-defined cultural history at its centre. [36] Chartier defines reading as 'production' and 'appropriation', definitions which are sanctioned by an intertextual definition of reading and developed via Barthes from Michel de Certeau whom he cites:

> 'The reader takes neither the position of the author nor an author's position. He invents in texts something different from what they "invented". He detaches them from their (lost or accessory) origin. He combines their fragments and creates something un-known in the space organised by their capacity for allowing an indefinite plurality of meanings.'[37]

For Chartier, it is the 'capacity' of the text as intertextuality, the text of fragments, to have multiple meanings that yields this definition and possibility of reading as production. This production is not an attempted reconstruction of the authorial meaning, it is invention, different and new ('unknown'). Nor is the reader another author, the practices of author and reader are (though this is ambiguous as in Barthes) different, if not altogether distinct, 'another production'. Chartier's concept of 'appropriation' extends this to accent reading as the process by which the text is drawn into the social and cultural world of the reader via the practices through which it is read and, more generally, the uses to which such readings are put. This focus on the reader and her/his practices is conceived in historical terms which foreground variegated use.[38]

In the programmatic 'Labourers and Voyagers: From the Text to the Reader', Chartier suggests some of the broad categories which a history of reading practices might encompass: reading aloud or silently (here he concurs with De Certeau's conjecture that silent reading frees the reader from interiorising the text, from embodying it); publicly or privately; intensive reading ('reading applied only to a few texts and sustained by hearing and memory') and extensive reading (consuming many texts, moving from one to another and another, 'granting little consecration to the

object read').[39] Like Bennett and Woollacott, Chartier's formulation of text and reading as intertextual is conceived as a challenge to the text conceived as transcending fixity and the subordination of the reader and reading which follows from it.[40] In opposition to the 'text', Chartier proposes the book, the manuscript, the pamphlet: the material forms in which readers encounter 'texts'. These exert a force on interpretation through the practices which produce and are inscribed within them - design, typography, spacing and so on -but are also changeable and, above all, historically situated.[41] In insisting on the variegated uses to which readings can be put, on reading as appropriation and production, Chartier is emphasising the active role that reading plays in meaning-construction within cultures. This counters what Chartier perceives to be a reflectionist tendency in French cultural history (once more this is comparable with Bennett and Woollacott). Chartier is also critical of the ways in which popular and literary forms are definitionally opposed and treated: whilst the latter are accorded complex and individuating analysis, the popular is subject to 'an external, collective and quantitative approach'.[42] But his argument goes beyond methodology: an intertextual conception of 'text' and reading contest the binary separation of the literary and the popular within culture as a whole, each is imbricated within the other.[43] Nor is appropriation the exclusive privilege of the 'people', as opposed to elites: Perrault's appropriation of folk tales is a case he cites in point.[44] For Chartier then, intertextuality is the theory of textual production and reception which make both variegated readings possible and enables reading, and consumption more generally, to be conceived and explored as active processes which are always historically situated.

6. Intertextual reception: some generalities

The 'representatativeness' of three of these accounts - Barthes, Bennett and Woollacott and Chartier - is evident in literary, media and cultural studies (though it is noticeable that with the exception of Genette, there are no real parallels to Riffaterre's approach). In each of these fields intertextuality has become central to accounts of culture and reception conceived as processes of appropriation and re-appropriation. Within literary studies, new historicism is the exemplar of a critical practice modelled from culture defined in this way. Emphasising above all the historical situatedness of the text, conceived as material instance and assemblage of often conficting discursive practices, sometimes described as a practice of reading,[45] new historicism draws eclectically on various strands of contemporary cultural theory: Derridean and Lacanian accounts of language, the Bakhtinian concepts of the dialogic and the heteroglossia and, perhaps above all, on Foucault's work on discourse, power and resistance.[46] The emphasis on conflict most clearly echoes Barthes, but the formulations of historical context are strongly congruent with Chartier and Bennett and Woollacott. New historicist readings

of Shakespeare are emblematic of its practice: confronting the reified poetic text of earlier studies with the 'materiality' of Shakespeare as drama, performance and increasingly publication.[47] Instead of the definitive, corrected version of a play, new historicism explores its variants as effects of contextual practices. Instead of a canonically conceived author whose meanings are fixed and timeless, Shakespeare is embedded in the languages and discourses of his historical 'moment' and his semantic stability challenged.[48] Concepts of intertextuality are central to the ways that new historicist readings attempt to break down and transform the conventional distinctions between text and context. Insisting that context is neither the banalising 'background' of the great work nor a homogeneised Zeitgeist, and that the text neither reflects nor expresses context, new historicist readings tend to focus on the relations between discourses and languages within and between texts, all of which are conceived as material practices: of signification and legitimation.[49] New historicism can best be understood, perhaps, as an institutionalised practice of reading governed by a conception of the intertextuality of text and culture.

In media and cultural studies, intertextuality is central to the dominant definition of culture as the modification and transformation of extant cultural materials. Hall's encoding-decoding model (explicitly grounded in Barthesian 'polysemy' and V. N. Voloshinov's multiaccentual sign), Dick Hebdige's work on the subcultural recombinations of artefacts and practices (informed by concepts of 'bricolage' and appropriation), the work of John Fiske and David Buckingham which draw on various accounts of intertextuality (including Barthes, De Certeau, Voloshinov and Mikail Bakhtin) are just a few instances.[50] Indeed, in the work of Fiske and Buckingham, intertextuality is a condition of existence of the mass texts which are popularised by their consumers: 'the central paradox of mass communication is that in order to ensure its popularity it must allow for a wide diversity of readings.'[51] The intertextuality of the mass text is then the rationale for its appropriation by diverse social and cultural constituencies, the guarantee of its popularity.[52] The concept of reception as appropriation reaches its apotheosis in work on fan cultures, for example, Henry Jenkins's *Textual Poachers*, which draws, as the title suggests, explicitly on De Certeau.[53] But Jenkins is critical of his characterisation of reading as leaving no traces (in contrast to writing), arguing that fan cultures transmute reading and interpretation into writing, for example, fan fiction. Here reading and writing are finally collapsed: reading is, or can become writing, 'another production'. The impact of De Certeau and Bourdieu on Chartier's work is representative of the ways in which cultural studies has configured this concept of active reading in terms of appropriation and use, which are the privileged categories in 'New Audience Studies'. Indeed, De Certeau and Bourdieu are central figures in much contemporary work on audiences and, more generally consumption.[54]

These accounts and the tendencies they represent suggest a number of concepts and questions which an account of intertextual interpretation must take account of and which will be explored in detail in this thesis. First and most obviously, these accounts propose that interpretation must involve more than simple decoding. If the text is a multiplicity of signifying practices, frequently manifested in the text only as fragments, there can be no underlying grammar of the text (Barthes, Chartier). If meanings are predominantly constituted in contexts rather than texts, there can be no single code which is present as such in the text and any determinate properties (narrative, for example) are subordinated to the contexts which constitute them as meaningful (Bennett and Woollacott, Chartier). Even in the case of Riffaterre, there are (at least) two codes - mimetic and poetic. Intertextuality clearly makes the conceptualisation of interpretation as a 'simple' and singular decoding process unsustainable. It must involve some other process or processes. Following on from this, the meaning of a text is multiple or, at the least, appears to be ambiguous (Riffaterre). The other three accounts all ascribe a non-apparent (i.e. not resolvable) conflict or dissonance to the text and the interpretative and reading possibilities that it engenders. With the possible exception of Riffaterre, interpretation cannot be conceived as a recovery or recuperation of meaning, authorial or not: just as writing reconfigures extant signifying practices, so interpretation, likewise and by analogy varies or transforms that which is read. Bennett and Woollacott's 'inter-textual' foregrounds the centrality of context in intertextual interpretation and Chartier's interest in reading as historical is congruent with this. His formulation of the book as a context opens up a further, important zone of textual knowledge which can shape interpretation and reading. Bennett and Woollacott's and Chartier's interest in reading practices and Barthes's account of how the myths of the literary limit reading, raise the question of process and practice. Is there a single process which describes the generality of all reading? And if there is, what are its relations with particular reading and interpretative practices? Finally, each of these accounts demonstrates that the interpretation of a particular text or text fragment is always bound to much larger social and cultural processes.

These accounts are then suggestive; but they also contain within them a number of serious problems which cannot be resolved by piecemeal modification. These problems may be helpful in themselves, identifying pitfalls to avoid and so on, but they suggest most strongly that existing theories of intertextual reading are not the place to begin a theorisation of the process intertextual interpretation. Rather a consideration of the problems suggests alternative lines of enquiry.

7. Specifying processes

The first set of problems concerns the ways in which reading, as both process and practice, is characterised. What is most difficult to assess in these accounts is the modal or non-modal status of reading (in both epistemic and deontic terms): are these accounts of how we do read, how we can or might read or how we should read? Is Riffaterre's reader's quest for the key to the poetic code really a description of reading? Or is it, as it appears to me, an idealised representation, the aim of which is to secure a 'poetic' that is distinct from the mimetic? Chartier and Bennett and Woollacott might call for a historical characterisation of Riffaterre's reader and his practices. But the ambiguity is not resolved by a specification of who reads, even though the two issues are closely related. Further, within the contingent zones of might and can, are there not radically differing degrees or forces of possibility? In 'Labourers and Voyagers: From the Text to the Reader', Chartier contends that the 'founding paradox of any history of reading' is 'to postulate the freedom of a practice of which, broadly, it can only grasp the determinations.'[55] A paradox indeed. But this binarising of determination and freedom, which is now a stock move in cultural theory, banalises contingency as the zone of a freedom opposed to an absolute necessity. This severely undermines the theoretical value of the concept. Contingency is surely best perceived as a graduated concept which encompasses everything from the barely possible to the highly probable. Above, I drew attention to the meanings of Text (and Work) in Barthes's writings. Is there not also a double sense of 'reading'? Is what Barthes formulates as reading, an ontological description of reading, reading as it always in some fundamental sense 'is', even when it is constrained by the myths of filiation; or, is this a model of reading as it should be or could be, liberated from myth? Or is it both? In Chartier, as in De Certeau, there is no such ambiguity: reading is 'another production'; there is no 'ought' and no 'can'. But can this clarity be taken at face value? Is this decisive 'is' really a description, or is it, as it so often seems to be in cultural studies, a desire?[56]

Second, are their shared processes (decoding, recoding, the procedures by which cultural knowledges are 'activated' or cued) common to all reading practices? In Barthes, and most strongly in Chartier and Bennett and Woollacott, there is an emphatic underscoring of reading practices - plural, differentiated, historically situated, culturally specific - which is central to the attack on reading conceived as undifferentiated reception. This 'corrective' strategy means, perhaps inevitably, that the relations between process and practice are not a critical priority. In Chartier there is no account of the processes of reading at all, except as a type of production. Practices such as reading aloud may significantly shape readers' relations with what they read, particularly in terms of the relative authority of the reading matter, but the procedures involved can at most be assumed as a kind of 'recoding' whose character remains

unsubstantiated. In *Bond and Beyond*, there is an informing but implicit concept of process. Bennett and Woollacott assign a central role to genre in their account of reading, defined not as a code or grammar inherent in the text, but as 'sets of expectations through which the possibilities of reading are organised'.[57] But how precisely does a particular practice construct meanings through a set of generic expectations which are inter-textually organised? And is this practice a specific variety of decoding or some other process? In their exploration of the early Bond novels, they emphasise both the similarities and differences between Bond and the imperial spy thriller. But do readers register these patterns of repetition and variation and what part might these play in interpretation? Riffaterre's account recognises the role of both, but the decoding of convention does not seem to warrant any explanation. These accounts are much clearer about what interpretation is not, than about what it is. It is clearly not the simple decoding of a single underlying code, but the positive attributes of the process remain extremely unclear.

Whilst within literary theory and criticism there is still a strong interest in interpretation and reading, within the fields of media and cultural theory (including film) there has been a sharp shift away from questions of interpretation to a concentration on context and 'use'.[58] In 'What Future for Interpretive Work in Film and Media Studies?' Alan Durant charts the theoretical shift from studies of the mechanisms and processes of interpretation to the contemporary, where 'social issues of identity construction to which particular critical interpretations of texts can make a contribution' have become the norm.[59] Further, '[a]udience Studies has, in effect, turned away from reception understood as interpretation towards reception understood as demographic description and lifestyle.'[60] Durant is not inherently hostile to the issues raised by use and users, but concerned by the backgrounding of interpretation as a set of processes and practices. Questions about context have to be reconnected with 'meaning' and interpretation if such studies are to avoid 'two divergent but complementary excesses'

> [F]irst presenting as textual interpretations empirical descriptions of cultural behaviour which have little to do with the texts they are deemed to be inspired by; and second, reading texts so creatively, for maximum relevance to the reader's own concerns that readings become what Umberto Eco, calling for limits on interpretation, has dismissively called 'psychedelic trips upon a text.'[61]

8. The productions of reading

The second set of problems concern the ways which reading and interpretation are characterised as 'productions', and the reader as active and frequently resistant. Each of these four accounts characterise reading as an active process and accords the active

positive value. Conceiving reading as intertextual sanctions this:
interpretation cannot be the simple decoding of signal into message. Further, the 'inherent' mobility of meaning proposed by inter-textuality and the potential for variegated reading proposed by De Certeau's always-already fragmented text significantly shape the reader as active, and metaphorically agile and mobile, inhabiting the cracks and spaces of the texts in order to create the 'readable space'.[62] Riffaterre may insist on the interpretative constraints of the intertext, but his reader is not immobilised by the anomalies that mark the presence of the poetic. Rather he[63] is motivated by the difficulties of discrepancy to search for the interpretative key that will decode the text's 'significance' and enable him to travel beyond the inertia of the mimetic. Barthes distinguishes the subordinating consumption instilled by the auratic work and the active distractions that characterise the reading of the text.[64] His association of reading with structuration, as opposed to the decoding of a pre-existent structure, renders it a process which makes meaning, not one which discovers it. For Bennett and Woollacott and for Chartier, the production defined as popular reading is a critique of discourses which configure literary reading as active, and popular or mass reading as passive, positions which are echoed again and again in media and cultural studies.

Two of these accounts (Barthes and Chartier) are also explicitly representative of another tendency: intertextuality as a sanction for resistant reading. In Barthes, to read against the myths of filiation, to read the text as text, as intertextual and, above all, as multiple, is to resist the ideological force of the institutions and practices of Literature itself. The reading that 'disentangles' but does not decipher, that refuses meaning or at least its closure, is in this sense resistant. The concept of resistance is central in much writing about reading. From Kate Millett in *Sexual Politics* to Eve Kosofsky Sedgewick, and in radically different ways, the notion of reading against - intention, preferred meaning, classification (fiction as theory for example) - is the dominant of all explicitly committed political reading. Whilst there is no necessary connection between such resistance and intertextuality, they are now commonly conjoined.[65] Chartier's conception of reading also suggests reading as resistance, but here the resistance is not the practice of a specific political position but a potential that seems to be inherent in all reading. Power is everywhere, but it is also overextended, cracking and fragmenting. But the reader works in the cracks and resists its scope and strictures. The effects of such resistance remain unspecified however as does a more precise formulation of 'resistance'.

The formulations of reading and interpretation as a production emerge in part out of a hostile or ambivalent relation to something which is generically described as Marxism, though it is usually specific varieties that are invoked. In Bennett and Woollacott, intertextuality and intertextual reception stand explicitly as counters to reflectionist or

expressivist reduction. Once the text is conceived as a variation or transformation of signifying practices, text-context relations cannot be conceived in any simple way as reflective or expressive. Chartier's hostility is more general and more oblique.[66] Barthes's position is more complex. On the one hand 'Text' is a challenge to any critical mode which seeks to discover what the text reflects or expresses. On the other, Barthes also suggests that Marxism might 'be able to materialise itself more if it pluralises itself'; the 'material' concept of culture that intertextuality proposes can, it seems, be configured within a Marxist cultural criticism.[67] In each case however, intertextuality is conceived as a challenge to any strictly determining relation which might govern reading, and as the underwriter of the active reader and productive reading. In this context, Riffaterre's 'compulsory' reader response is easily forgotten.

There is however an overwhelming vagueness in the concept of reading as active, productive, a production. Again there is greater clarity about what reading is not, than about what it is: reading is not consumption or reception understood in their narrow and denigrated senses, suggestive of passivity. In literary criticism and theory, the invocation of intertextuality as the 'guarantee' of active reading is just the latest move in a long history. It is present, although in shadowy and ideal form, in early nineteenth century Romantic discourse where an opposition emerges between the reflective and critical Romantic reader, whose judgement is central, and the repetitive reading that is part of the mechanised routines of daily life.[68] Such mechanised practices threaten the adjudication which is the valorised dominant of literary reading, a relation strongly intimated in I. A. Richards's *Practical Criticism*, first published in 1929.[69] Richards's proposed model of reading is precisely active, in significant part because literary judgement and the forms of reading it requires are, to say the least, difficult. The reading and judgement of poetry are the antithesis of a natural process which must be learnt and extensively practised.[70] For Richards, 'difficulty' is only partly a function of the poem's complexity - the relations between the four types of meaning.[71] The anxieties which motivate *Practical Criticism* are at least as much about the assumptions that readers bring to poetry. Richards challenges contemporaneous literary-critical assumptions, but beyond this lies an implicit attack on the broader contours of contemporary culture which emerges most strongly in his discussion of 'the stock response'. Both the poem and the reader's interpretation can be categorised as 'a stock response', 'ready-made and available with less trouble than if it had to be specially made out of raw or partially prepared materials.'[72] The stock response is, of course, the effect of the 'made-to-measure' culture of which it is a part: the quintessence of passive reading. Richards's active reader is just one instance of what seems to have become the near inevitable locking of active and resistant: his reader resists the recipe temptations of made-to-measure culture (civilisation). The active audience, like the productive consumer, that is now a topos in media and cultural

studies emerges from the same discourse about culture, but it is the bad other of literary reading - the consumption of mass communication forms - that is the site of focus and redefinition. Whether it is the 'readers' of women's or men's magazines, soap opera, romance, or Hollywood cinema, the aim is to challenge the consumer of mass forms as the duped, doped 'victim' of the text as hypodermic.[73] Fiske's account of the popular as the appropriation of mass texts and Jenkins's fan cultures are emblematic of the consumer as producer.

The concept of the active reader has itself been subject to a certain scrutiny within media and cultural studies, and the binary 'active'/'passive' has been criticised as ambiguous and/or vague.[74] The 'active' choice of passivity by film audiences and the ways in which non-reaction (which could be the definition of a certain kind of passivity) to certain textual cues constitutes an active response in that it resists those cues are also topics of discussion.[75] In the main, these criticisms are still imbricated within the binary. To choose passivity is still characterised as an active response because the viewer or prospective viewer is the agent who chooses it. These critiques are, for the most part, motivated by the attempt to extend the scope or 'rule' of the active into new domains of audience experience and practice. And the question of what active means, except in the sense of meaning more that it apparently appears to, often gets lost. More generally, the relations between notions of active reading and resistant reading need to be disentangled rather than, as is increasingly the case, equated or made synonymous. Riffaterre and Iser are only two instances of an active reading which is precisely not resistant to the meanings and values of the text.[76] These notions of active and passive, of reading that is productive and resistant clearly raise important questions about the role of text, reader and, perhaps above all, context in the construction of meaning. Barthes, Bennett and Woollacott and Chartier all conceive reception as a process of recontextualisation. But the new historicist conception of the material text and the definition of reading as (another) production in media and cultural studies evade rather than answer the questions raised by such formulations. Both these simultaneously invoke and resist Marxism: the material text and productive reading are both alibis for other materialities, and above all that other production which is now largely ignored or disregarded within such work. The formulation of reception as production often leads to a collapsing of the two: writing is reading; reading is writing. And intertextuality is one of the key concepts which have been invoked to effect the dissolution of the two. Production is valorised within reading: the emphasis on the active is precisely the marker of this. But it is devalued (and increasingly ignored) 'within' production. [77] Chartier is an interesting instance of this strange doubling of the meaning and value of production. He at once insists on the difference between production and reception and resists it. In recognising the materiality of the text (as book, pamphlet, manuscript) and its role in shaping reading practices, he is clearly

distinguishing between production as publishing and reception as reading.
But his classification of the book as one modality of varying historical situatedness of reading undermines the distinction. In one sense of course this classification is incontestable, as the most cursory glance at any two editions of the same text will confirm. But at the same time this classification subordinates production (publishing) to consumption (reading) by making the book or the edition 'merely' a modality of variegated reading. It is unlikely that the scope of such discussions will be usefully extended unless there is a renewed attempt to formulate context or better, contexts, not only the micro-particular temporal and spatial co-ordinates of particular acts of reception, but the broader, longer and stronger contexts which are also constitutive of interpretation and reading, contexts which include production.

9. Alternative directions

Intertextual theories of reception offer many indicators of what an account of intertextual interpretation might look like and the issues it must engage with. As outlined above, interpretation must involve more than decoding and cannot be a straightforward process of meaning recuperation. Textual meaning is (or appears to be) multiple (or ambiguous, or conflictual) and never wholly resident in the text. Context, encompassing not only the textual knowledges of the reader but the knowledges made possible by the whole situation of reading, are fundamental to the interpretative process. But, I have also shown that existing intertextual theories of reception also share a number of problems. The 'negative' characterisations of reading as 'not decoding' and 'another production' mark a profound lack of specificity about the processes of intertextual reading. These accounts also demonstrate that there is no consensus about the meaning of intertextuality itself, which is formulated in different and often incompatible ways. Riffaterre's definition centres on the way that intertextuality orders ('regulates') the relations between text and intertext but the text-intertext relation also strongly delimits the intertextual knowledges which the reading process activates. Barthes emphasises the non-originality of the text as intertextuality: a mosaic or tissue of 'quotations' or 'citations', a mosaic which can never be fully inventoried or quantified ('drawn from the innumerable centres of culture').[78] This definition is clearly at odds with Riffaterre, whose hypogram is precisely a key to the privileged code of the poetic and the text's significance. Chartier foregrounds the fragmentary character of the intertextual text: it is this which makes the multiplicity of readings and 'recodings' possible. Bennett and Woollacott define intertextuality as 'a system of references', the singular 'system' intimating a structuralist 'grammar', assuming an underlying order that is at strongly at odds with both Barthes and Chartier. This definition is, of course, strongly motivated by their 'competing' concept, inter-

textuality. Subsequently they suggest that the former is an effect of the latter: intertextuality is not inherent in the text but the manifest and variable effect of specific and socially organised reading formations.[79]

At the beginning of this introduction I mentioned the various 'appropriations' of intertextuality as unsurprising and, perhaps, appropriate. I also defined 'intertextuality' very loosely, and deliberately so, to cast the net widely and suggest some of the ways in which intertextuality and reading have become imbricated. Definitions vary widely and it is clear that the differences identified above cannot be dismissed as mere variations of a central and relatively stable core. Intertextuality and interpretation must be formulated in far more rigorous and precise terms. This can only be achieved if the focus of inquiry is significantly shifted, first to intertextual theories of textual production, second to linguistic pragmatics.

I have tried to suggest at least some of the discursive dialogisms which shape these definitions but I have said little as yet about the definitions which these accounts both repeat and transform, re-read and re-write. To speak of the origins of intertextuality as a theoretical concept is perhaps, paradoxical; provoking an unease which can force the beginnings of this narrative back to Plato.[80] And in suggesting a return my purpose is not to secure an 'originary' or founding definition which renders all subsequent variations epigonic. What motivates this return is the desire to rethink intertextuality as a theory of text and above all textual production which is how it developed in the writings of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva. The aim is first to develop an account which clearly specifies and differentiates intertextual production from intertextual reception, so avoiding the weaknesses of an unspecified concept of production and the collapsing of production and reception (reading as writing). And second, to differentiate and explore the relations between the interpretative process and interpretative practices and between interpretation and reading. Therefore, in chapter one, I will examine, in some detail, various accounts of intertextuality as textual production, focusing on the work of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and the early Kristeva.

This then is the first element of the shift of focus. But what of interpretation? The vagueness, ambiguities and problems in the definitions discussed above suggest the need to look elsewhere, to pragmatics, or, more precisely, to what is often called 'Anglo-American pragmatics'. In chapter two, I will examine this tradition, focusing on a set of accounts which theorise interpretation as an inferential process: the utterance treated as 'evidence'. Only a few provisional remarks are called for here. Conceptualised from within linguistics, pragmatics has been defined as one component or 'level' within the study of language as a whole: the study of language in use as opposed to the study of linguistic structures (segmental and suprasegmental phonology, morphology, syntax, lexical semantics) in terms independent of context. For some, pragmatics is the residue, the level or dimension which intervenes to explain what no

other domain of linguist study can. For others, pragmatics is the privileged field of study, subordinating, and in the process transforming, other modes of linguistics. It is this tradition of strong pragmatics that I am interested in: where definitions of meaning are always bound to definitions of context, where what an utterance means is specific to and delimited by context. Here, context is broadly defined as the knowledges which addressees deploy in interpretation. The pragmatic interest in the constitutive role of context in meaning and interpretation, coupled with the recognition that contexts and therefore utterance meaning are, in theory at least, infinite, encourage highly specific formulations of the processes and mechanisms of interpretation - a fundamental deficit in intertextual theories of reception. Pragmatics is not an unknown in either literary, media or cultural theory and certain aspects of pragmatic thinking have been strongly metabolised within these areas. The name of Charles Sanders Peirce, sometimes credited as the founder of pragmatics (as well as philosophical pragmatism) is familiar in both, though it is his tri-partite classification of signs that has the strongest currency.[81] Closer to home, Riffaterre draws on Peirce's concept of the interpretant, as does in a very different way, Jean Jacques Lecercle whose writings on interpretation and literary forms draw extensively on pragmatic concepts as well as a broad range of contemporary cultural theory.[82] 'Speech Act Theory' is perhaps the most familiar pragmatic reference in contemporary literary and cultural theory. Marie Louise Pratt and latterly, Judith Butler, have appropriated aspects of the work of J. L. Austin and J. Searle and Jacques Derrida's critique of Austin, in 'Signature Event Context' is another familiar instance of engagement and disengagement.[83] The term 'pragmatics' itself also has a currency in cultural theory: the writings of Voloshinov and Bakhtin writings have been described as 'social pragmatics'.[84]

My focus in chapter two is inferential theories, specifically those of Paul Grice and Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson. These treat the utterance as a certain kind of evidence from which interpretations (or conclusions) are derived, in conjunction with various knowledges of the addressee. Inferential accounts of meaning are probably the least discussed in post-structurally inflected cultural theory, including intertextual accounts.[85] Yet inferential theories explicitly address some of the key questions raised by intertextual ones. What is or are the process(es) which hearers use in interpretation? How and why are some knowledges (rather than others) mobilised and deployed? How is one set of interpretations selected over another/others? And inferential theories also offer some very plausible answers and powerful accounts of the interpretative process. Beyond this, there are important congruences between intertextual theories and inferential ones. Both theories argue that a simple and singular en-de-coding cannot explain meaning production or interpretation. This is their 'common' starting point and inferencing is theorised as an alternative process. Both define 'utterances' as

inherently polysemous and, following on from this, insist that any utterance has a range of possible interpretations. Neither approach presupposes that the hearer will recover the speaker's intended meaning from the utterance. Both can, though in very different ways, be conceived as rhetorical approaches to language and meaning, focusing on the relations between texts, contexts and those who produce and interpret them.

That said however, intertextual and inferential accounts formulate these positions and reconceptualise text and the processes of production and reception in radically different ways. It is not possible to simply 'apply' pragmatic concepts to what are, broadly speaking, post-structuralist accounts of textuality and meaning, or to conjoin or collapse inferential and intertextual accounts. Chapter three stages an encounter between the two accounts or traditions of thinking meaning, where each is subjected to the theoretical scrutiny of the other. As already suggested above, inferential theories expose the lack of rigour and specificity in intertextual accounts. Above all, intertextual theories ignore inference as a process. Intertextual theories also expose the limits and flaws of inferential ones. Above all, inferential accounts cannot conceive the text as intertextuality, and contexts as discursive. Further, inferential theories ignore interpretative practices and the relation of these to evaluation and explanation within reading as a whole. Finally, both traditions share a problem. Inferential theories focus on the interpretation of speech modelling writing and its reception from the interpretation of speech. Intertextual accounts centre on the reading of writing. Both ignore the constitutive contexts of print, the book and the processes of publishing, contexts which shape not only the interpretation of print texts but that of speech itself. Through the critique I develop an account of intertextual interpretation which is elaborated in chapter four. Intertextual interpretation is substantively (though not exclusively) an inferential process. However, the ways in which inferential processes work are very different to the accounts proposed by existing inferential models of communication. It is, as I will show, intertextual relations which govern the patterns of inference in interpretation, relations which are shaped not only by text and reading but by the situation of reading and in particular the edition, the material form in which the text is read. Intertextual interpretation and reading are shaped in important ways by production practices, not just writing but publishing practices - editing, design, production and marketing - which intersect in the edition. This in turn calls for an expanded definition of genre, conceived intertextually as an intersection of production - here publishing - practices. A focus on these relations in turn draws attention to the multiple tonalities of interpretative contingency - no longer a singularity, binarised against a mythical necessity - but a gradient ranging from the highly probable to the barely possible.

Chapters five and six develop two case-studies which extend the arguments about the relations between intertextuality and inference, and substantiate the expanded idea of genre and how it shapes the reading process. The case-studies examine two contemporary publishing categories: 'classics' (Penguin, Everyman, Modern Library, Signet) and literary theory textbooks (Introductions and Readers), chapters five and six respectively. Here I develop a mode of intertextual analysis which recasts a number of classical rhetorical strategies as intertextual practices. Through detailed analyses of particular editions, I develop a stronger and more plausible theorisation of the interpretative process and its relations to reading. I also develop a mode of intertextual analysis which can identify ~~and~~ interpretative and reading possibilities in terms of a graduated contingency and which demonstrates that genre - in the expanded sense - significantly shapes interpretative possibilities and the explanatory and evaluative practices which are always in play in any instance of reading. These conclusions will be elaborated in the concluding chapter. It is the dynamic between constitutive semantic unfixity (predicted by both theories) and, equally importantly, the processes of fixing which lies at the heart of interpretation and reading. Both unfixity and fixity are effects of the intertextuality of both text and the processes of interpretation. Interpretative possibilities are many and rich but for the most part interpretations are few and sparse.

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[1] Jane Austen, *Emma* , 1815 (London: Everyman, 1995), p.22.

[2] See Raymond Williams's discussion of 'improvement' in Austen in *The Country and the City* in the chapter 'Three Around Farnham' (London: Hogarth, 1985).

[3] Emma and Harriet meet Mr Martin 'the very next day' and Harriet discovers that he has not been able to get *The Romance of the Forest* because 'he was so busy the last time he was at Kingston' (p.24). His business in Kingston is properly more important than popular novels. For an extended elaboration of the pleasures and pitfalls of novel reading see *Northanger Abbey.* It is significant that the innocent heroine, Catherine Morland is habituated to such fare by the duplicitous and morally dubious Isabella Thorpe; and whilst the novel does not condemn such reading out of hand, it is made clear that such influences can have pernicious effects.

[4] See Joseph Litvak, 'Reading Characters: Self, Society, and Text in *Emma* ' in *Emma: New Casebooks* , edited by David Monaghan (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992).

[5] Dimock, 'Feminism, New Historicism and the Reader' in *Readers and Reading,* edited by Andrew Bennett (Harlow: Longman, 1995), pp.112-131, p.114.

[6] Dimock, 'Feminism, New Historicism and the Reader', p.114.

[7] The soaps in question were *Brookside* and *Hollyoaks*, both produced by Mersey TV, for Channel 4.

[8] As is common with such dramas when they run 'social issue' stories, a helpline was advertised to viewers at the end of each episode.

[9] See for example David Vincent's, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). In the introduction, Vincent emphasises the difficulties of defining literacy as a 'simple' and discrete competence, exemplified in UNESCO's changing definitions of literacy which have increasingly emphasised 'that levels of literacy only acquire meaning in relation to the demands of the society in which the individual lives' (p.16). Vincent's own definition of literacy, signatory ability as it is represented in marriage certificates and for a long time a conventional definition, has itself been subject to critique, which he acknowledges (p.17). Chartier, for example draws attention to the ways that reading cannot be definitively inferred from signatory ability in 'Labourers and Voyagers: From the Text to the Reader' in *Readers and Reading*, pp.132-149, p.144. Vincent himself draws attention to the ways in which the relations between writing and reading changed in the period under discussion, moving from a situation where working class reading as it existed bore no necessary relation to an ability to write, to one where the two were taught together in the context of school. p.10. In *Culture and Society* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962) and particularly in the early chapters of *The Long Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), Williams explores the complex relations between literacy, political representation, values (social, cultural and ethical) and authority.

[10] I am thinking particularly of 'The Death of the Author' (1968), *S/Z* (1970), 'From Work to Text' (1971), 'Textual Analysis of Poe's Valdemar' (1973) and also, the extended 'conversation' with Stephen Heath printed in *Signs of the Times: Introductory Readings in Textual Semiotics* , edited by Stephen Heath, Colin McCabe and Christopher Prendergast (Cambridge, no publisher or date given but approx. 1973), pp.41-51. The page numbers for the other texts discussed below refer to the following editions: 'The Death of the Author' and 'From Work to Text' in *Image-Music-Text* (London: Fontana, 1977); *S/Z* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990) and 'Textual Analysis' in *Untying the Text: A Post-*

Structuralist Reader, edited by Robert Young (London; Routledge 1981), pp.133-160. Barthes includes an earlier theoretical 'self' in his critique of structuralism, witness for example, the contrast between the definition and status of the proairetic code (code of actions) in *S/Z* and his 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives' in *Image Music Text.*

[11] 'The Death of the Author' in *Image Music Text*, p.146.

[12] Barthes, 'Conversation' with Stephen Heath in *Signs of the Times*, p.47.

[13] *S/Z*, p.viii. There is indeed a certain scope for a judgement and classification of this type. In 'Textual Analysis of Poe's Valdemar', a text which works over and to some extent modifies the practice of *S/Z*, Barthes describes his method in the following way: '[O]ur reading will retain the procedure of reading; only this reading will be, in some measure, filmed in slow motion' (p.137). The procedures of the analysis seemingly 'mime' the process of reading itself. But the overall aim of the analysis is described as 'to grasp the narrative as it was in the process of self-construction' (p.155). This again effects a blurring between reading and writing, suggesting the idea of the text as a process or 'structuration' but also that the processes of reading themselves enable an understanding of how meaning is produced, because of a certain resemblance, though not an identity.

[14] Barthes, 'From Work to Text', p.159.

[15] 'Innumerable centres' from 'The Death of the Author', p.146; 'the myth of filiation' from 'From Work to Text', p.160. By myths of 'filiation', Barthes means all those practices which attempt to fix the work and delimit its meanings: author, genre, influences and so on (pp.160-1).

[16] 'Irreducible plural' from 'From Work to Text', p.159; 'it is not a question ... ', from *S/Z*, p.6.

[17] In *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* he characterises himself as an 'echo-chamber'. Cited in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, edited by Michael Worton and Judith Still (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 1-44, p.18. It is also interesting that in 'From Work to Text', the reader-stroller, 'at a loose end', 'passably empty' is also a writer, 'it is what happened to the author of these lines, then it was that he had a vivid idea of the Text' (p.159). Once more reading and writing are 'squashed' together.

[18] The notion of 'distraction' appears to be cognate with Walter Benjamin and both owe much to Bertol Brecht. See 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' in *Illuminations* (London; Fontana, 1973), pp.241-2.

[19] The consistent capitalisation of 'Text' and the lower case 'work' in this essay is strategic and polemical. It is the inverted image of the practice which capitalises 'Author' but uses the lower case for 'scriptor' in 'The Death of the Author', though in the case of 'scriptor', it is the valued concept which is not capitalised.

[20] 'From Work to Text', p.147.

[21] 'Compulsory Reader Response: the Intertextual Drive' in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices* , pp. 56-78.

[22] See for example his introduction-interview to 'Flaubert's Presuppositions' in *Diacritics* 11, 4, (1981), pp. 2-11. 'To my mind, the real problem is understanding what makes interpretation mandatory rather than a matter of free choice' (p.2).

[23] 'Compulsory Reader Response', pp.56-7.

[24] 'Compulsory Reader Response', p.77.

[25] These indices or markers are 'a tantalising combination' of 'the enigma and the answer, of the text as Sphinx and the intertext as Oedipus'. ('Compulsory Reader Response', p.77).

[26] Although on occasion Riffaterre insists on the difference between hypogram or hypotext on the one hand and matrix on the other, this is not consistent. In the introduction-interview, which accompanies 'Flaubert's Presuppositions', he seems to be suggesting that whilst the identification of the hypogram/hypotext is a necessary component of any reading, the identification of the matrix is an explicitly theoretical or critical operation, an attempt to reconstruct the 'generator' of the poetic code: a working back from the text to the rules of its production (pp.2-11). The distinction between hypogram and hypotext would seem, as de Man suggests, less significant. See Paul De Man, 'Hypogram and Inscription: Michael Riffaterre's Poetics' in *Diacritics* 11, 4 (1981), pp.17-35. Riffaterre defines the interpretant as 'a sign that translates the text's surface signs and explains what else the text suggests', a sign which is moreover 'equally pertinent to two codes or texts, the meaning-conveying one and the

significance conveying one.' (*Semiotics of Poetry*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978, p.81).

[27] 'Compulsory Reader Response', p.76.

[28] Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott, *Bond and Beyond: The Political Career of a Popular Hero* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987), p.18.

[29] *Bond and Beyond*, pp.44.5.

[30] *Bond and Beyond*, pp.81-3.

[31] *Bond and Beyond*, p.64.

[32] *Bond and Beyond*, p.60. Bennett and Woollacott develop their concept of inter-textuality in opposition to Julia Kristeva's definition: 'Whereas Kristeva's concept of intertextuality refers to the system of references in other texts which can be discerned within the internal composition of a specific individual text, we intend the concept of inter-textuality to refer to the social organisation of the relations between texts within specific conditions of reading' (pp.44-5). Kristeva's account is discussed in detail in chapter one.

[33] *Bond and Beyond*, pp.60-2, 69-82 and 212-20. Mulvey's status as a central figure in *Screen* foregrounds the more general dimension of this critique. In *Cultural Populism* (London, Routledge, 1992), Jim McGuigan discusses the theoretical tensions and conflicts in the 1970s between the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (which Bennett was aligned with for a period) and *Screen* as the journal of the Society for the Education in Film and Television, (pp.62-3). A particular focus of the 'Birmingham' critique, as here, is the textual determinism perceived to be inherent in Mulvey's approach. Stuart Hall's 'Recent Theories in Theories of Language and Ideology: a Critical Note' (*Culture, Media Language*, London: Routledge 1980, pp.157-162), offers a much more interesting critique, focusing on the shift from 'homology' to 'identity' in Lacanian inflected accounts of the subject and ideology where the different claims that ideology/the unconscious is structured <u>like</u> a language are reconstituted as a non-figurative declarative.

[34] *Bond and Beyond*, p.65.

[35] *Bond and Beyond*, pp.2-3.

[36] The rationale for this project is elaborated in a fascinating essay, 'Intellectual History: History of Mentalités' in *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988). The essay is both a critique of 20th century French intellectual history (including his own earlier work) and a programmatic statement for its reconfiguration.

[37] Michel de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p.169. Cited in Chartier, 'Intellectual History and the History of Mentalités', p.42.

[38] See, Chartier, 'Introduction' in *Cultural History*, p.13.

[39] 'Labourers and Voyagers' in *Readers and Reading* , p.143.

[40] 'Introduction', in *Cultural History*, pp.11-12.

[41] See 'Labourers and Voyagers' pp.138-142.

[42] 'Intellectual History and the History of Mentalités', p.36 and pp.43-4.

[43] Chartier cites Bakhtin's reading of Rabelais with its emphasis on the ways in which the popular is imbricated within the literary in 'Intellectual History', p.37.

[44] 'Intellectual History', p.39.

[45] See for example *Modern Literary Theory*, 4th edition, edited by Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh, (London: Edward Arnold, 1999), and their introduction to a section on new historicism.

[46] On the debt to Foucault, see for example Jonathan Dollimore's 'Transgression and Surveillance in Measure for Measure' in *Political Shakespeare New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, edited by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp.72-87, an early collection of new historicist and cultural materialist approaches to Shakespeare. On the theoretical 'roots' of new historicism more generally see H. Veeser Aram, *The New Historicism* (London: Routledge, 1989) and *The New Historicism Reader* , edited by H. Aram Veeser (London: Routledge, 1994). On Bakhtin, see for example, Stephen Greenblatt's classic 'Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and its Subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*' also in *Political Shakespeare*, pp.18-47, especially pp.32-3.

[47] For a recent broadly new historicist treatment of Shakespeare in this context, see Heidi Brayman Hackell, 'The "Great Variety" of Readers and Early Modern Reading Practices', in *A Companion to Shakespeare* edited by David Kastan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

[48] What is also important is how Shakespeare's texts are variously explored as modes of representation which consolidate or/and subvert dominant practices of representation and legitimation.

[49] See for example Dollimore's introduction to *Political Shakespeare* which elaborates the critical assumptions and varied commitments within new historicism, pp.2-17, especially pp4-7.

[50] On Hall's use of 'intertextuality', see 'Encoding/Decoding' in *Culture, Media, Language*, pp.128-138, especially pp.132-4. On Hebdige, Fiske and Buckingham see McGuigan, *Cultural Populism* chapters two, three and four.

[51] Buckingham, cited in *Cultural Populism* p.154.

[52] The logic of this relation has been criticised, for example by Justin Lewis in 'The Meaning of the Things: Audiences, Ambiguity, and Power' in *Viewing, Reading, Listening: Audiences and Cultural Reception*, edited by Jon Cruz and Justin Lewis (Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), pp19-32. Lewis argues that whilst the semantic ambiguities of the mass text are undeniable and that audiences may often not decode the preferred meaning of the text, '[a]n ambiguous TV program can be just as manipulative [ideologically] as an unambiguous one' (pp.31-2, my parenthesis).

[53] Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers* (London: Routledge, 1992). For the critique of De Certeau see in particular pp.44-49 and chapter five ('Scribbling in the Margins: Fan Readers/Fan Writers'). This is one of the main theses of the book.

[54] On De Certeau, see for example Roger Silverstone, 'Television and Everyday Life: Towards an Anthropology of the Television Audience' in R. Dickinson, R. Harindranath and O. Linné eds., *Approaches to Audiences; A Reader* (London: Arnold, 1988). See also *Textual Poachers* which also draws strongly on Bourdieu's work on practices of distinction, in particular on the critical distance proposed by the bourgeois aesthetic and the affective immediacy and close proximity in the response of the popular . On Bourdieu, see for example McGuigan's discussion of David Morley's work in *Cultural Populism,* p.134.

[55] Chartier, 'Labourers and Voyagers' in *Readers and Reading*, edited by Andrew Bennett, p.147.

[56] "The desire called cultural studies' is a major thesis in Francis Mulhern's *Culture/Metaculture* (London: Routledge, 2000), see in particular pp.157-163. Mulhern characterises contemporary cultural studies as 'compulsiv(ly] modern[ist]' in its rejection of 'a formative, therefore limiting,

history', arguing that its utopianism often translates the actual present into a desired for future. 'Meta-cultural discourse in the left-modernist variation incarnates the impulse to accelerate Williams's slow reach for control, a utopian desire to be - actually be - one step ahead of its own validating historical process' (p.163).

[57] Needless to say, 'texts are drawn into genre relationships only through the frameworks of inter-textual reference which animate readers' practices', *Bond and Beyond*, p.81.

[58] See for example, Roger Silverstone, *Television and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 1994), David Morley, for example, 'Between the Public and the Private: The Domestic Uses of Information and Communications Technologies' in Viewing, Reading, Listening: Audiences and Cultural Reception, edited by Jon Cruz and Justin Lewis (Boulder: Westview, 1994); Martin Barker, 'Audiences R Us' in *Approaches to Audiences: A Reader*, edited by R. Dickinson, R. Harindranath and O. Linné (London: Arnold, 1988), and with Kate Brooks, 'On Looking into Bourdieu's Black Box' in *Approaches to Audiences.*

[59] *Screen* 41, 1 (2000), pp7-17, p.11.

[60] Durant, 'What Future for Interpretive Work in Film and Media Studies', p.11.

[61] Durant. 'What Future ... ', p.17.

[62] The phrase is De Certeau's and Chartier appropriates it, glossing it as 'the texts in their material and discursive form' ('Labourers and Voyagers', p.133-4).

[63] Riffaterre's reader is always indicated by the masculine pronoun. Here and elsewhere, I retain the original gendering of the texts I discuss. In my own formulations and examples, I have opted to vary the gendering of the subject.

[64] Barthes, 'From Work to Text' in *Image - Music - Text*, pp.161-2: 'The work is normally the object of consumption' (my emphasis).

[65] One of the most interesting contemporary examples of such a reading practice is Eve Kosofsky Sedgewick. See, for example, 'Is the Rectum Straight? Identification and Identity in *The Wings of the Dove*' and 'Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl', both in *Tendencies* (London: Routledge, 1994). In the former, for example, she reads Henry James's novel as a theoretical formulation of sexual and gender formation, drawing on various contemporaneous texts and discourses.

[66] In 'Cultural History' for example, Marxism is never mentioned by name, but it is everywhere as an object of critique and his acknowledgements to the work of Bourdieu and Foucault tell the same story.

[67] Barthes, 'From Work to Text', p.160.

[68] The distinction between 'public' and 'people', identified by Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society* as a central Romantic opposition, is suggestive, not only of the anxieties about industrialisation and the mechanisation of culture in particular, but also of differently valued modes of reading. See *Culture and Society*, pp.48-64. It is clear that mechanised or routine reading is not conceived as strictly speaking passive: the public does not merely read or consume what it is 'given'. Rather public or popular 'taste' is conceived as driving and distorting production, a demand which threatens literature itself. The recurrent motif that binds reading and books with trains and railway stations is the emblematic representation of the danger to books and reading: a configuration of 'bad' reading as an instrumentally driven distraction (a literal passing of time, a flight of fantasy) that is also embedded in the mechanised routines of daily working life. See for example Matthew Arnold cited in Williams's *The Long Revolution*, p.190: 'a cheap literature, hideous and ignoble of aspect, like the tawdry novels which flare in the bookshelves of our railway stations'. Barthes, interestingly invokes the same description in 'From Work to Text' but reverses the binary: 'structurally there is no difference between cultured reading and casual reading on trains' (p.162).

[69] *Practical Criticism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1929).

[70] See for example p.183: 'Whatever else we do by the light of nature it would be folly to maintain that we read by it.'

[71] The four types of meaning are 'sense' - the 'something' that is said, which corresponds most closely to referential meaning; 'feeling' - the attitude (predominantly conceptualised in terms of emotions) that the speaker has towards the something that is said; 'tone' - the speaker's attitude to his listener (the assumption here of the canonical speech situation where two *speaker-hearers* are co-present, co-temporal and co-spatial, as opposed to a situation of reading is interesting); and finally 'intention' - the speaker's 'aim, conscious or unconscious, the effect he is endeavouring to promote' (pp.181-182). It is intention which is seen to substantively 'order' the other three but its effects cannot be reduced to these (p.182). This formally resembles the irreducibility of significance in Riffaterre's work.

[72] Richards, *Practical Criticism*, p.204.

[73] See for example, Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991) and also 'Romance and the Work of Fantasy: Struggles over Feminine Sexuality and Subjectivity at Century's End' in *Viewing, Reading, Listening*, pp.213-232. Here Radway reflects on *Reading the Romance* and subsequent feminist studies of fantasy genres and particularly romance, noting her own ambivalence to seeing the romance readers of her study as making 'a positive response to the conditions of everyday life' and romance as 'empower[ing]', p.214. See also, Cora Kaplan, '*The Thorn Birds*: Fiction, Fantasy: Femininity' in *Sea Changes: Essays on Culture and Feminism* (London: Verso, 1986).

[74] For example Silverstone (cited above). See also 'Audiences R Us' by Martin Barker, and 'On Looking into Bourdieu's Black Box' by Barker and Kate Brookes in *Approaches to Audiences.*, also cited above.

[75] On the vagueness of the concepts see Silverstone, *Television and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 1994) pp.152-158; on strategic passivity, see for example, Barker and Brookes, 'On Looking into Bourdieu's Black Box', especially pp.220-5; on non-reaction as active see Barker's 'Audiences R Us', especially pp.186-7.

[76] See also Leavis in *Culture and Environment*: 'We cannot, as we might in a healthy state of culture leave the citizen to be formed unconsciously by his [sic] environment; if anything like a worthy idea of satisfactory living is to be saved, he must be trained to discriminate and resist'. Cited in McGuigan, p.46.

[77] The backgrounding of 'production' is clearly evident in the recent writings of Fiske and Morley but is also the underlying assumption which informs most ethnographic work on audiences.

[78] 'The Death of the Author', *Image - Music - Text*, p.146.

[79] 'Intertextualities are the product of specific, socially organised, inter-textualities', *Bond and Beyond* p.86.

[80] See for example Michael Still and Judith Worton's introduction to *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*: 'Although the term *intertextuality* dates from the 1960's, the phenomenon in some form is at least as old as recorded human society' (p.2). Ambiguous here is the sense of 'phenomenon'. If

intertextuality is a theory of textual production in general then the meaning of this sentence is tautologous. But Still and Worton seem to mean more than this: phenomenon seems to mean a concept or theory and it is this sense that shapes the subsequent discussion of 'intertextual theories' include, amongst many others, Plato, Aristotle, Longinus and Quintilian (pp.3-8).

[81] See for example, Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p.1. Although Levinson's account of pragmatics credits Charles Morris with developing the modern usage of pragmatics, he describes Morris as 'following' Peirce. See also Peter Wollen's discussion of Peirce's relevance for the study of film in Signs and Meanings in the Cinema (London: Secker and Warburg, 1972), pp.120-124.

[82] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, *Interpretation as Pragmatics* (Houndsmill: Macmillan, 1999).

[83] Marie Louise Pratt, *Towards a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977) Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990) and *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (London: Routledge, 1997). Barthes, too, draws on the concept of the performative in 'The Death of the Author' to characterise the act of writing: 'a rare verbal form in which the enunciation has no other content (contains no other proposition) than the act by which it is uttered', Image - Music - Text, pp.145-6. In 'Signature Event Context' in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds* edited by Peggy Kamuf (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), Derrida applauds the ways in which Austin 'had to free the analysis of the performative from the authority of the *value of truth*' but argues that Austin is unable to break with the concept of communication: which does essentially limit itself to transporting an already constituted semantic content guarded by its own aiming at truth' (p.98). Butler draws strongly on this text in 'Critically Queer' in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (London: Routledge, 1993) where she discusses the relations between queer and heterosexual speech acts (I now pronounce you man and wife is a key example). See in particular pp.224-230.

[84] See for example, Trevor Pateman 'Pragmatics in Semiotics: Bakhtin / Voloshinov', *Journal of Literary Semantics* XVIII 2 (1989), pp.203-15. See also Simon Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp.28-31.

[85] Lecercle is an exception here. Gricean implicature is an important feature in, for example, *The Violence of Language* (London: Routledge, 1990). However, inference and implicature play no substantive role in his recent book, *Interpretation as Pragmatics*.

PART ONE

Chapter One: Intertextual Theories

> To parody a well known saying, I shall say that a little formalism turns one away from history, but that a lot brings one back to it (Roland Barthes).[1]

The origins of a theory which casts the production of meaning as the transformation of the always-already read easily become a vexed and anxious question, as two recent accounts of intertextuality amply demonstrate. Both seek a measure of comfort in the argument from authority. The first begins with Plato, then, via Aristotle and a cluster of rhetoricians, and after a longish stay with Montaigne, finally finds itself back in the more familiar terrain of Bakhtin and after.[2] The second, a recently published textbook, draws on an authority and genealogy now equally conventional: Saussure.[3] Not because of the anagrams, which could perhaps be suggested by Kristeva's reading; and not because of the critique of the Saussurean word. No; it is the 'differential sign' itself which is proposed as origin.[4] In proposing a return to intertextual theories of production, it is no simple matter to decide where 'home' is. The very surfeit of contemporary theories of meaning production which have been dubbed 'intertextual' can also present difficulties. Bakhtin, Kristeva, Barthes. Certainly. Voloshinov? Not always.[5] Derrida, Ricoeur, Genette, Bloom, Gilbert and Gubar, Showalter?[6] That depends. But what is elaborated here is neither a return to origins (though it could be so argued), nor a (doomed) attempt to be exhaustive. Rather, it is the specifying of what I will argue is a distinctive lineage of theories of textual production which offer the richest theoretical opportunities for developing an account of intertextual interpretation: Voloshinov's writings on the multiaccentual sign and verbal interaction, Bakhtin's on the heteroglossia, genre and dialogism, and Kristeva's on intertextuality and the relations between the system of language and the speaking subject. In the most general terms, what unites these writings is first an insistence on the constitutive sociality of writing and the subject, where social relations are conceived as conflictual; second, an abiding interest in the political functions of discourse, its role in the production of consensus and authority, and/or its challenge to these; and third, an explicit attempt to theorise speech and writing as processes, and as a production, and in particular here the development of a strong concept of textual context. In the three main sections below, I will offer a detailed critical exposition of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva's theories of textual production. In the concluding section, I will draw out the distinctiveness of this lineage (in part through a series of comparisons and contrasts), identify some relevant problems and return to some of the questions posed in the introduction about intertextual theories of reception. Most importantly, what is the

relationship between these accounts of intertextual production and the problems in intertextual theories of reception?

It should be noted that the relations between texts and signatures here are particularly complex. The 'authorship question', one of the many cruces of debate about the Bakhtin circle, is the most obvious issue, and pertains directly to *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*.[7] But Kristeva's relations with Bakhtin are also complex: on occasion her 'readings' are impersonations of a Bakhtin who is in fact a Kristeva - 'the early Kristeva'.[8] The authorship question falls outside the concerns of this thesis. My focus here is on texts and their discursive relations. My convention here is to treat the signatory of a text as a convenience of representation - hence Voloshinov and not Voloshinov / Bakhtin or 'Bakhtin'. This usage makes no claim for the authorship of *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*.[9]

1. Voloshinov: verbal interaction and the multiaccentual sign

Voloshinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, originally published in 1929, first appeared in English in 1973. Reviewing interest in the book was stimulated by its 'association' with Bakhtin whose seventy-fifth birthday was officially celebrated in the same year. A book, first published in the late twenties, which provided an extensive and cogent critique of Saussurean linguistics, and represented what was then a '"forgotten tradition"' of Marxist linguistics, was more than a historical curiosity to a number of theorists - most notably Fredric Jameson and Raymond Williams; and it was also a key text for the early work of the Language and Ideology group at the Birmingham centre for Cultural Studies.[10] Williams casts Voloshinov as a theorist who made a decisive break with earlier attempts to formulate a Marxist linguistics.[11] 'His originality lay in the fact that he did not seek to apply other Marxist ideas to language. On the contrary he reconsidered the whole problem of language within a general Marxist orientation'.[12] Williams's interest also lies in what he sees as Voloshinov's strong challenge to Saussure's 'formalism' and what that implies about consciousness, a focus shared in a different way with the Birmingham group, though reformulated as subjectivity.[13] Emerging from the Birmingham reading is an attempt to suggest the relative autonomy of the subject in Voloshinov's writing - an issue to which I will return below - and the rather complacent and topos-heavy hindsight that Voloshinov could go no further because he did not have at his disposal Lacan's 'linguistic reading' of Freud.[14]

Voloshinov's key contribution lies in his concepts of the multiaccentual sign and verbal interaction.[15] These are developed within the programme of the book as a whole whose aim is to redefine the object of linguistic study within the framework of a Marxism which is not 'mechanical'.[16] The dialectical process out of which this

redefinition emerges is through a critique and synthesis of two opposing types of linguistic theory: 'individualist-subjectivism', Voloshinov's term for Romantic models of language, and 'abstract-objectivism', which conceives meaning exclusively as the production of an autonomous linguistic system are structured as thesis and antithesis within the book.[17] 'Verbal interaction', which emerges as the synthesis, is the 'basic reality' of language and the proper object of linguistic study:

> Any utterance, no matter how weighty and complete in itself, is only a moment in the continuous process of verbal communication (p.95).[18]

What makes his definition distinctive is the expanded setting in which he views the study of language and linguistics, as a critical component of the study of ideologies, understood here as broad zones of knowledge and practice - 'scientific knowledge, literature, religion, ethics and so forth- (p.9) - which are conceived in resolutely monist terms.

> Any ideological product is not only itself a part of a reality (natural or social) just as in any physical body, any instrument of production, or any product for consumption, it also, in contradistinction to these other phenomena, reflects and refracts another reality outside itself (p.9).

The proposition that linguistics is a component of the study of ideologies can be understood in at least two senses. Linguistics in its various forms should be studied as ideology - hence the critique of existing linguistics in the book. And, the study of ideologies must centre on questions of meaning.

> Everything ideological possesses meaning, it represents, depicts or stands for something lying outside itself. In other words it is a *sign. Without signs there is no ideology*' (p.9).

> The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. They equate with one another' (p.10).

Language itself does not coincide with ideology, as anything can be transformed into a sign and be made meaning-bearing. But ideologies are more than bodies of knowledge, they involve socially determined relations to knowledges and values. Voloshinov's definition of the word makes this explicit. This social reality of language can be understood at the level of the word itself, once the word is viewed in the context of its use.

> ....[T]he word sensitively reflects the slightest variations in social existence.
> Existence is not merely reflected but *refracted.* How is this refraction of existence in the ideological sign refracted? By an intersecting of differently

> oriented social interests within one and the same sign community, *i.e., by the class struggle.*
>
> Class does not co-incide with the sign community, i.e., with the community which is the totality of users of the same set of signs for ideological communication. Thus various different classes will make use of one and the same language. As a result differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign...
>
> This social multiaccentuality of the ideological sign is a very crucial aspect (p.23).

Meaning is contested because there is always a fundamental disjuncture between a shared language (implicitly here a national language) and the conflicting social interests of its users. And, given the constitutive inequality that Voloshinov's explicitly Marxist version of social relations proposes, the dominant social formation will always seek to generalise its own meanings and values: to render its language uniaccentual.[19]

From the concept of the multiaccentual sign, Voloshinov develops a critique of the two dominant trends in linguistics, arguing in each case that the explanation of meaning, and more specifically its source, is erroneous. Romanticism defines language as expression and locates the source of meaning in the individual psyche. Language is the outer manifestation of 'that inner something which is expressible' (p.84). Voloshinov's critique of Romantic dualism is conventional if forceful; [20] it is his second argument which is distinctive and pertinent to the development of 'verbal interaction', building as it does on language as a 'refractor' of social reality. 'Utterance as we know is constructed between two socially organised persons' (p.85), and 'not any two members of the species *Homo Sapiens'* (p.12). The 'formative center' of meaning is not within the psyche but without (p.85). 'In point of fact, *word is a two-sided act.* It is determined equally by *whose* word it is and *for whom* it is meant' (p.86). Romantic theories do not recognise that the individual is 'a socially organised person', that meaning is constituted in the relation between self and other and is never a matter of individual 'expression'. The production of meaning is therefore always interpretative and evaluative - affirming and/or contesting - of social relations.

At the same time, however, Voloshinov is attracted by the creativity attributed to the speaker in Romantic accounts, and this becomes a component of his critique of abstract-objectivism, whose fundamental error is the sourcing of meaning within the system - the 'langue' that governs 'parole' for example.[21] Retaining his emphasis on the relations between users of language, he rejects a system that can generate only 'normatively identical forms'.

> What is important for the speaker about a linguistic form is not that it is a stable and always self-identical signal, but that it is always a changeable and adaptable sign. (pp.67-68)

Voloshinov makes a critical distinction between signal and sign in order to draw a distinction between two types of process, the recognition of a signal and the understanding or interpretation of a sign. The separation is a deliberate abstraction as these processes cannot be differentiated in any instance of language use. For Voloshinov, the signal is the word out of context and shorn of its ability to mean. His opposition is intended to show that it is an error to source meaning in the language system alone, and that use in specific conditions is the dominant in the production of meaning. For the speaker,

> the center of gravity lies not in the identity of form but in that new and concrete meaning it acquires in the particular context (p.68).

It is context which centres or 'fixes' meaning and not the system which posits the false abstraction of a merely 'formal' identity.

> Thus verbal interaction is the basic reality of language.
>
> Dialogue, in the narrow sense of the word, is, of course, only one of the forms - a very important form, to be sure - of verbal interaction. But dialogue can also be understood in a broader sense, meaning not only direct face-to-face vocalised verbal communication between persons, but also verbal communication of any type whatsoever. A book, i.e., *a verbal performance in print,* is also an element of verbal communication ... it is calculated for active perception ... and for organised *printed* reaction ... Moreover, a verbal performance of this kind also inevitably orients itself with respect to previous performances in the same sphere ...Thus the printed verbal performance engages as it were, in ideological colloquy of large scale: it responds to something, objects to something, affirms something, anticipates possible responses and objections, and so on. (p.95)

It is worth citing this definition at length because its rhetorical strategies exemplify its argument. Voloshinov's argument does indeed 'respond', 'object', 'affirm' and 'anticipate'. After asserting that verbal interaction is the basic reality of language, (the importance of the claim stressed by the one sentence paragraph[22]), the text anticipates a commonplace gloss of 'verbal interaction': dialogue. But this conventional understanding ('face-to-face', 'vocalised', 'communication between persons') identifies only one of its forms. Every production of meaning is a dialogue. The demonstration of this requires a shift from the commonplace of face-to-face speech to what is anticipated as a limit case for verbal interaction: the book. The book appears to be finite and discrete, but it becomes the example that affirms every instance of meaning as verbal interaction. Voloshinov begins with the most commonsensical way in which this can be the case: first, a book can be talked about, it can form part of a conventional dialogue. Second, a book is intended to be read and thought about. Third, there are institutionalised modes of reception for print texts. So far it would

seem, so commonsensical, but these very obvious senses in which the book is a dialogue also counter anticipated objections.

A book is not only oriented 'forwards', as it were, towards its anticipated reception, it also dialogues with 'previous performances in the same sphere': with 'something' that already exists and is responded to, affirmed or objected to. The repetition of 'something' stresses the materiality of the text's context and suggests an active set of relations between any instance of textual production and other instances: any text takes up a relation to 'previous performances' which it may affirm and/or contest and it is therefore always interpretative and evaluative of these. These relations, between text and text, and texts and context are outlined a paragraph later where three topics are prescribed for the study of language:

> (1) the forms and types of verbal interaction in connection with their concrete conditions; (2) forms of particular utterances, of particular speech performances, as elements of a closely linked interaction - i.e., the genres of speech performance in human behaviour and ideological creativity as determined by verbal interaction; (3) a re-examination, on this new basis, of language forms in their usual linguistic presentation. (pp. 95-96)

What is immediately noticeable here is the interest in 'form' and 'type' or 'genre' which assumes the possibility of classifying particular utterances in terms of their similarities to and differences from others. Therefore whilst, as was seen above, Voloshinov is concerned with the new and particular meaning that words or utterances acquire in particular contextual configurations, this relation is in significant part shaped by genre. Second, forms or genres must be studied in context. This context is both immediate, local - the setting, the relations between speaker and hearer and so on - but also something 'broader'. The sense that context is not only the immediate situation of utterance is supported by the acknowledgement of a methodological difficulty. 'An important problem arises in this regard: the study of the connection between concrete verbal interaction and the extraverbal situation - both the immediate situation and, through it, the broader situation' (p.95). This broader situation, though it is not explicitly defined would seem to be the same as that indicated by the multiaccentual sign: a situation of conflictual social interests and desires. It is more appropriate, then, to speak of the contexts which constitute genres or types of verbal interaction. But genres also shape one another, 'as elements of a closely linked interaction': genres should not be studied as discrete entities because this is to reject the reality and role of verbal interaction. The third element of the new linguistics is the methodological consequence of the first two imperatives; it also re-states them: 'a re-examination, on this new basis, of language forms in their usual linguistic presentation.'

> As a whole entity, the utterance is implemented only in the stream of verbal intercourse. The whole is after all defined by its boundaries, and these boundaries run along the line of contact between a given utterance and the extraverbal and verbal (i.e. made up of other utterances) milieu (p.96).

Utterances are the 'real' units of language and the real objects of study but the contexts which shape them - verbal and extraverbal - are a part of the whole and a part of the study. The third and final section of the book is an attempt to re-draw an existing object of linguistic study - reported speech - from the standpoint of verbal interaction.

For Voloshinov, reported speech is not only a formalised instance of verbal interaction, it has a correspondence with 'the governing tendencies of speech reception', with interpretation (pp.117-8). He does not claim that the processes of speech reporting directly express those of interpretation, but that there is a congruence between them. This is because the patterns of reported speech are shaped by the possibilities of reception processes, although once established they too play a role in shaping reception (pp.117-118). This in turn suggests something about how he conceives the relations between language and the speaking subject, an issue which Ellis raises in his discussion of Voloshinov. "'An outer sign incapable of entering the context of inner signs i.e. incapable of being understood and experienced, ceases to be the sign and reverts to the status of a physical object"'.[23] For Ellis, Voloshinov's distinction between outer and inner sign (the former those units which make up utterance in a context, the latter, those units which constitute the subject's thought processes) is evidence of the subject's relative autonomy. The subject is 'in some sense constitutive of the social reality that constructs it' (p.192).[24] This is clearly 'in some sense' true but Ellis seems to misread the distinction that Voloshinov makes between inner and outer sign. Both need to be distinguished from the signal. There can be no inner sign that it is not also an outer sign, otherwise the socialisation of meaning that Voloshinov proposes is only partial and there is a zone of activity which remains untouched by social relations.

Voloshinov criticises existing analyses of reported speech as 'static' and 'inert', because the reported speech is 'virtually divorc[ed]' from the reporting context.

> [T]he true object of inquiry ought to be precisely the dynamic interrelationship of these two factors, the speech being reported (the other person's speech) and the speech doing the reporting (the author's speech). After all, the two actually do exist, function, and take shape only in their interrelation, and not on their own, the one apart from the other (p.119).

Meaning is produced by the relationship between the reported speech and the reporting context, a new textual context. The self-other dynamic of the two-sided act that is word and utterance is once more re-iterated. Voloshinov identifies two broad

tendencies in the reporting of speech: 'linear' and 'pictorial'. The linear style of reporting speech is distinguished primarily by being 'content-analyzing': the key interpretative concern of the reporting is with the referential function of the speech being reported (p.120).[25] This concern with referential meaning tends to reduce or even eliminate what Voloshinov describes as the 'internal individuality' of the speech being reported and often, the styles of reporting and reported speech are homogenised (p.120). This in turn calls for conventions - of design and typography as well as lexis - which differentiate reported from reporting speech. By contrast, the pictorial style is characterised by incursions of the reporting speech into the reported or vice versa, a 'weakening (of) the peripheries' between reported and reporting utterance (p.121). The work of interpreting or transposing the reporting speech is likewise different.

> This time the reception includes not only the referential meaning of the utterance, the statement it makes, but also all the linguistic peculiarities of its verbal implementation (p.121) .

Voloshinov's central focus in this section of the book is the constitutive role of textual context and the ways in which textual production is, in significant part, an interpretative process of transformation. The intersections between reported speech and reporting contexts are also presented as historical varieties which are part of an epochally imagined narrative. Therefore, various forms of linear reporting are dominant from the Middle Ages till the end of the 18th century (although the pictorial style does have a 'moment' during the Renaissance, especially in France). The pictorial style rises to dominance in the early 19th century and seems to converge with the rise of the bourgeoisie in Western Europe. Its contemporary incarnation is 'relativistic individualism' and seems to correspond to modernism. The prior authority of the reporting context is itself relativised by the reported one (p.123). The discussion of reported speech is the only point in the book where a preference for a particular mode of representation asserts itself. The pictorial is clearly a positive value in at least some of its varieties, apparently because it represents the underlying reality of verbal interaction which the linear reporting style would seem to deny. This is also the only moment in the book where a literary and fictional corpus becomes a discernible part of the object of the new linguistics which Voloshinov is proposing.

Voloshinov's formulations of the multiaccentual word and verbal interaction and offer the outline of an intertextual theory of textual production which asserts that the relations between texts are always shaping of meaning, in terms which are dynamic and transforming. At the same time these relations are, in important senses, constrained. The 'utterance' is always ordered by what precedes it: by its relations with previous texts, genres, and by the reception that it anticipates. This formulation is

decisively shaped by the terms of which it is the synthesis and the 'general Marxist orientation' which drives the critique. As Williams succinctly formulates it:

> This enabled him to see 'activity' (the strength of the idealist emphasis after Humboldt) as social and to see 'system' (the strength of the new objectivist linguistics) in relation to this social activity and not, as had hitherto been the case, formally separated from it.[26]

Most simply, Voloshinov seeks to think through how constitutive social difference and conflict shapes language production and how social differences produce linguistic ones.

2. Bakhtin: the many modes of being dialogic

Bakhtin's contribution to the lineage of intertextual theories considered here can be summarised very succinctly.[27] First, he thinks through the conditions that make '[a]ny utterance ... a link in a very complexly organised chain of utterances...', and the consequences.[28] Here, Bakhtin works within the contradiction of language as individual and social, as mine and the other's, which becomes the condition of language and meaning as dialogic (or, more broadly speaking, intertextual). This can be viewed as both an elaboration and transformation of the programme announced in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Bakhtin's other contribution is the rich and suggestive discussion of the many modes of being dialogic.

But whilst Bakhtin's contribution is easily summarised, any attempt at a more detailed and critical exposition can easily run aground in ambiguities, inconsistencies and incoherence. Needless to say, Bakhtin's inconsistency has itself become a critical topos.[29] But this is doubtless preferable to those who seek the key that will unlock and decipher his writings once and for all, who treat Bakhtin as an anticipator of every subsequent theory of language and culture, or those who 'terrorise' with their 'real' Bakhtins.[30] In Bakhtin criticism everything is a site of struggle - his discursive genealogy and 'disciplinary' location, his politics, and of course, the very meanings of his concepts.[31] In 'Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', Ken Hirschkop suggests that the multiple appropriations of Bakhtin, the very enthusiasm which with '*everyone* can endorse the central elements of the Bakhtinian programme indicates that the hard work has not really begun.'[32] Hirschkop was writing in 1989 and his 'everyone' is intended to suggest the political variety of such endorsements. This has a particular salience for any assessment of Bakhtin's contribution to intertextual theories. Williams begins his chapter on language in *Marxism and Literature* by asserting that '[a] definition of language is always, implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world'.[33] Any definition of language is political in that it necessarily imagines social relationships in particular ways. But although Bakhtin's definition of language clearly

espouses its intrinsic political character, his speaking subject is always-already social, and his vision of social relations is constitutively conflictual, his social and political 'theory', if such it can be called, is notoriously difficult to draw out and pin down. Voloshinov's explicit desire to formulate a specifically Marxist linguistics makes the contrast. For whilst Bakhtin's writings can be appropriated by a Marxist cultural theory, his strong tendency to translate all questions about social relations into questions about meaning, and the unspecified character of the forces of centralisation which he invokes pose problems for reading Bakhtin as a Marxist. He neither proposes the mode of production as that which constitutes and orders social relations, nor explicates the relations between social relations in general and the processes of meaning which are a part of that generality. This has implications for his formulations of context and the dialogic.

If Bakhtin's understanding of language as mine and yours, individual and social marks a certain continuity with Voloshinov then his concept of the heteroglossia marks a significant reformulation, both of Voloshinov's concept of the multiaccentual sign and of some of his own earliest work. The term 'heteroglossia' is introduced in *Discourse in the Novel* to describe the historical reality of any 'language'.

> At any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also - and for us this is the essential point - into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, "professional" and "generic" languages, languages of generations and so forth' (pp.271-272).[34]

Something of this 'so forth' is suggested earlier when he discusses the novel's incorporation of a 'diversity of social speech types ... : social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour' (pp.262-263). This characterisation is typical of both the richness and the vagueness of many of Bakhin's definitions. Some of the languages which comprise the heteroglossia are easily identifiable and translatable: class languages for example, the languages or registers of working life. Others are not: 'characteristic group behaviour' and 'tendentious languages'. Despite this, the examples focus two important and interrelated aspects of his definition. First, language is a site of overlapping and competing social values: languages are socio-ideological and are therefore imbricated in the processes of power and authority. Second, languages can be distinguished in terms of their historical duration. The slogan of the hour may not outlast the 'hour', other languages may have more staying power. The formulation of value here - as social - present in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* and in *The*

Formal Method in Literary Scholarship, differs from Bakhtin's earliest attempts at definition.[35] Hirschkop is once again instructive. In his discussion of one of Bakhtin's early essays, 'The Architectonics of the Deed', he shows that a very different concept of value, 'human intention and purpose of any kind', organises the relationship between the individual and language understood as grammatical and logical system. Intonation is the means by which the speaker's linguistic relations to objects of experience can be individuated and endowed with a unique purposiveness.[36] Here value is individual, not social. The contrast between the two texts is important if we are to understand the distinctiveness of Bakhtin's later formulation and its importance for intertextuality. In the first, the individual's utterance is a compromised term - it is the realisation of an always pre-existing set of possibilities, but it is also endowed with the individuality and uniqueness that intonation makes possible. But the social and the individual elements of the utterance do not make contact with one another. The individual utterance semantically exceeds the linguistic system but cannot, it would seem, impact on it - given the unique relation that intonation establishes with the referent. The shift to value understood as social, is fundamental to all of Bakhtin's concepts considered here, not only the heteroglossia, but utterance, genre and the overarching concepts of dialogic and monologic.

As mentioned above, heteroglossia also differs from Voloshinov's vision of a single language variously accented by different and competing socio-political values. While the idea of language does not strictly conflict with the arguments of *Marxism*, it is possible to see Bakhtin's insistence on languages as the attempt to refine the conditions of possibility of the multi-accentual sign, introducing a certain stability and systematisation into meaning. The multiaccentual sign is now an intersection of languages. The heteroglossia is defined not only as the multiplicity of languages but their relations, and above all, an overarching conflict: between the reality of the heteroglossia and the various attempts to assert or enforce a single or unitary language which has a singular relation to reality.

> A unitary language is not something given [*dan*] but is always in essence posited [*zadam*] - and at every moment of its linguistic life, it is opposed to the realities of the heteroglossia. But at the same time it makes its real presence felt as a force for overcoming this heteroglossia, imposing specific limits to it, guaranteeing a certain maximum of mutual understanding and crystallising into a real though relative unity - the unity of the reigning conversational (everyday) and literary language, 'correct language' ('Discourse in the Novel', p.270).

For Bakhtin, a unitary language is always a myth in the Barthesian sense, and has to be read as such, as both 'true' and 'unreal'.[37] '[T]he very concept of *a* language ... [is] already the result of particular social conflicts'.[38] The heteroglossia, as a critical concept, can disclose the unreality of a unitary language. Equally important, however,

are the ways in which the unitary language is 'true': 'its real presence' in the production of meaning. The opposition confirms the socially contested character of meaning: the unitary language, as both claim and the practices which seek to substantiate it, 'gives expression to forces working towards concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization' (p.271). A vague formulation, but it is clear that the unitary language participates in the processes of power, seeking to extend and strengthen the values of the dominant social formation.[39] This dynamic is central to his definitions of utterance and genre.

> Every utterance participates in the "unitary language" (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal stratifying forces).
>
> Such is the fleeting language of a day, of an epoch, a social group, a genre, a school and so forth. It is possible to given a concrete and detailed analysis of any utterance, once having exposed it as a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language (p.272).

Just as the heteroglossia 'cannot be reduced to a linguistic system',[40] so the utterance as its minimal unit, cannot be conceptualised in exclusively linguistic terms.

> Any concrete discourse (utterance) finds the object at which it was directed already, as it were, overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist - or, on the contrary by the "light" of alien words that have already been spoken about it (p.276).

Context is constitutive of the utterance, but is understood here as always-already textualised. Previous utterances about the object shape the speaker or writer's utterance, as does the addressee, also textualised as an expected response. The speaker has a

> dialogic relationship toward an alien word within the object and ... [a] relationship toward an alien word in the anticipated answer of the listener ... (p.283).

This definition of the utterance as dialogic, as a dynamic between this particular use and others - extant and possible - is also the minimal unit in Bakhtin's 'meta'- or 'translinguistics', most explicitly elaborated in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*.[41] Translinguistics counters theories which ignore the complex context-bound character of meaning in use. Defining the production of meaning as the relation between utterances, which is in turn organised by a relation between utterances, most obviously challenges Saussure.[42] Bakhtin's awkward and tendentious definition of the utterance in the 'The Problem of Speech Genres', which can include anything from a one word rejoinder to a

novel, is further evidence of his hostility to the explanatory value of exclusively 'linguistic' description and analysis.[43] More successfully, his analysis of double voiced discourse and the hybrid utterance in *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics* and 'Discourse in the Novel' which are, in 'narrow' linguistic terms, sentences, reveals the limits of the sentence as a unit of meaning and analysis.[44] It is also this definition of the utterance as dialogic which forms the basis for his definition of genre.

Genre is central to Bakhtin's definition of language practice as individual and social and, like language, it introduces a stability into practice. Such stabilities and relative regularities are an important element within this lineage and central to the account of interpretation which is developed in the thesis. Indeed genre is a central concept in Bakhtin's work per se, although those who assert its centrality frequently also charge the majority of other critics with ignoring or backgrounding it.[45] In 'The Problem of Speech Genres', Bakhtin elaborates his most explicit and abstract definition of genre as a 'typical' utterance and its centrality to language practice.

> We speak only in definite speech genres, that is, all our utterances have definite and relatively stable typical *forms of construction of the whole*. Our repertoire of oral (and written) genres is rich. We use them confidently and skilfully *in practice* and it is quite possible for us not even to suspect their existence *in theory* (p.78).

Bakhtin clearly ascribes a fundamental role to genre conceived as a relative stability. He also insists on the 'rich' repertoire of genres that speakers have, which accords with the 'heterogeneity' that characterises the field of speech genres as a whole (p.60). A few sentences later, Bakhtin insists that genre plays a crucial role in language acquisition, where it is almost akin to grammar.

> We are given these speech genres in almost the same way that we are given our native language, which we master fluently long before we begin to study grammar ... Speech genres organize our speech in almost the same way as grammatical (syntactical) forms do (pp.78-79).

When we speak, we 'by no means always' take words 'from the system of language in their neutral , *dictionary* form',

> [w]e usually take them from *other utterances*, and mainly from utterances that kindred to ours in genre ... Consequently, we choose words according to their generic specifications (p.87).

Genre is also, for Bakhtin, a critical, indeed polemical, concept . He is insistent that there are no areas of language use which are not 'genred' - even the most 'intimate'.[46] The use of speech genres and the frequent use of speaker, maintains the force of his argument that utterance and practice are the proper objects of 'linguistics', even though

many of the 'speech' genres instanced here are precisely not speech, but writing or print. [47] And heterogeneity, which will always also reveal a shared verbal nature, is the precondition of any adequate definition of genre.

The heterogeneity of linguistic reality does not mean that it is not ordered. Bakhtin defines genre as a 'relatively stable type of utterance', where there is a 'relatively stable' relation between a speaker, a hearer and what is spoken about, a particular content which he usually refers to as 'theme' (p.60).

> Genres correspond to typical situations of speech communication, typical themes and consequently also to particular contacts between the meanings of words and actual concrete reality under certain typical conditions (p.87).

A genre is a type of utterance which articulates a specific and reproducible kind of relation to what it depicts and the relations between addresser and addressee. Bakhtin discusses the latter under the heading of 'addressivity' (p.95). The addressee of a genre may be characterised and typified in a range of ways as 'lower, higher, familiar, foreign' in relation to the speaker (p.95). Relative proximity, social and cultural, is the key criterion here, once more making knowledge and authority central.

> Thus, addressivity, the quality of turning to someone, is a constitutive feature of the utterance; without it the utterance does not and cannot exist. The various typical forms this addressivity assumes and the various concepts of the addressee are constitutive, definitive features of various speech genres (p.99).

What is suggested here is not only the constitutive role of addressivity in genre, but the role of genre in shaping social relations. The military command, for example, does not simply reflect the authority of the commanding officer over his 'men', in some significant part, it constitutes his authority and their obedience as the predominant ground of their social relationship. This indicates one of the ways in which Bakhtin formulates text-context relations: text or utterances play a role in shaping context.[48] But other formulations also emerge in this text, which, while suggestive, create inconsistencies and contradictions which cannot be fully resolved.

Texts or utterances, it can be seen, play a role in constituting speaker, hearer and referent - understood as contexts of utterance. But at the same time, Bakhtin introduces a notion of extra-linguistic context which itself plays a role in shaping utterance meaning.

> ... [E]ach sphere in which language is used develops its own *relatively stable types* of these utterances. These we may call *speech genres* (p.60).

> A particular function (scientific, technical, commentarial, business, everyday) and the particular conditions of speech communication specific for each sphere give rise to particular genres ... (p.64).

The typicality of an utterance - its reproducibility - seems here to be an index of the reproducible situation of which it forms a part, a situation whose social purposes are certainly textualised by the particular utterance-type but which can be differentiated from it. The short military command presumes a set of social situations - from training and drill, through rehearsal to actual battle - and relations - an established chain of command, obedience to this, 'team' work and so on - which are not exclusively constituted by genre. It is this use of context which makes sense of Bakhtin's continuous insistence on the 'object' that is talked about, the relations between words and 'concrete reality'. The object may be obscured by the mist of its previous and anticipated significations, but the impossibility, in practice, of conceiving 'reality' extra-linguistically, does not mean that this reality either dissolves or has no constitutive role in meaning.

These two understandings of text-context relations do not, of course, necessarily contradict one another. It is perfectly possible to describe text and context as co-constitutive, to argue that each has a shaping role on the other. But Bakhtin never makes this claim explicitly, nor does he suggest whether there is a hierarchy of determination, or explicate the relations between textual and non-textual context. An ambiguity about the last surfaces strongly in his account of how the word 'exists' for the speaker.

> Therefore one can say that any word exists for the speaker in three aspects: as a neutral word of a language, belonging to nobody; as an *other's* word, which belongs to another person and is filled with the echoes of the other's utterance, and finally as *my* word for ... I am dealing with it in particular situation...(p.88).

As a unit within the system of a language, no one can claim ownership of the word, but these are not the conditions in which we know and use language (there is a strong similarity here with Voloshinov's distinction between signal and sign).[49] The word belongs to the other in the sense that it is charged with the accents of its previous usages which interpret and evaluate the 'reality' that it depicts. But it is also 'mine', the mine of my 'particular situation' with its particular co-ordinates of speaker and hearer, time, place and purpose. The constitutive role of textual context is relatively clear - other representations, extant or possible as anticipations, constrain 'mine'. But in what precise sense is the word 'mine'? And how does this relate to a 'particular situation'? If 'we speak only in definite speech genres', this 'mine' is both the product and the production of a context, in the ambiguous terms discussed above. And this reading would map with the polemic against parole understood as 'a completely free combination of forms of language' which is so marked in this text (p.81). In a footnote

he comments: 'Saussure ignores the fact that in addition to forms of language there are also forms of combinations of those forms, that is he ignores speech genres'.[50]

But there is also a suggestion that my 'particular situation' is not quite, never quite, a typical situation, or rather that this situation lies within the zone of a typicality but is not reducible to it - a suggestion which weakens the strong sense of genre identified above. The distinction between genre and utterance is, of course, theoretically necessary if their relations are to be understood, but Bakhtin seems to mean more than this. In the immediately preceding paragraph a different distinction is drawn.

> The word's generic expression - and its generic expressive intonation - are impersonal, as speech genres themselves are impersonal (for they are typical forms of individual utterances, but not the utterances themselves. But words can enter our speech from others' individual utterances, thereby retaining to a greater or lesser degree the tones and echoes of individual utterances (p.88, my emphasis).

To distinguish between the typical 'intonation' or accentuality of a genre and that of an individual utterance, there must be a distinguishable individuality in the particular utterance which can override its impersonal generic inflection. Words can either 'enter our speech' through genre or through 'others' individual utterances'. The 'but' suggests an alternative entry point. But how does this accord with 'we speak only in definite speech genres'? What seems to surface here is a resistance to the implications of his own argument, a willingness to engage with the role of others' individual utterances - 'this is why the unique speech experience of each individual is shaped and developed in continuous interactions with others' individual utterances' (p.89) - but not with the more ordered institutional sociality that his own definition of genre would seem to suggest (the return to 'intonation' can perhaps be seen as evidence of this).[51] Accompanying this is a retreat from the typicality of situation, of extra-linguistic context: the unrepeatable utterance finds its complement in 'the unrepeatable individual context of the utterance' (p.88).[52]

Whilst 'The Problem of Speech Genres' emphasises the heterogeneity of genre in general, it is in Bakhtin's other writings (especially those collected in *The Dialogic Imagination*) which offer the richest elaborations of how different genres respond to the heteroglossia. Central here are the set of distinctions through which he develops the concept of the novelistic. In *Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy*, Hirschkop argues that Tzvetan Todorov's formulation of Bakhtin's novel as 'the expression of the innate tendencies of language' is 'half-right' in the sense that 'Bakhtin never shakes off the desire to portray the most impressive and difficult achievements of modern culture as the setting loose of the dialogic powers stored up in the structures of ordinary discourse'[53] This is clearly important for thinking language and culture as intertextual processes. If a certain zone of practice is severed from the rest in terms of its

operations and procedures, then the explanatory force of intertextuality as a general theory of how meaning is produced must obviously suffer. It would mean that some practices are intertextual (the novelistic, the carnivalesque) and others are not; and that there is some absolute boundary between the two types of practice which clearly weakens the notion or/and force of permutation as the condition of possibility of text. But Todorov is only half right, Hirschkop argues 'because Bakhtin has incorporated "novelness" into his theory to begin with.'[54] Hirschkop sees this as part of his commitment to always theorise language and culture as historical. This in turns draws attention to the ways in which intertextuality as a general theory of meaning is always also a historical theory: intertextuality is an ontological concept but one in which a historical process is always-already inscribed.

What is also crucial here is the set of distinctions and oppositions through which Bakhtin elaborates the novelistic, which, like the poetic, is not a genre but a mode of discourse.[55] It is, in part, defined against the poetic. Whilst 'the poet strips the word of other's intentions', seeking to rid the text of diverse alien accents and participating in the centralising forces of literary language, the novelistic designates forms of writing which recognise the heteroglossia and represent its complex relations.

> The prose writer does not purge words of intentions and tones that are alien to him, he does not destroy the seeds of social heteroglossia embedded in words, he does not eliminate those language characterisations and speech mannerisms ... glimmering behind the words and forms ('Discourse in the Novel', pp.297-298).

Just as the novelistic is a shaping force that the poetic seeks to undo, so the poetic is an active agent in the production of the novelistic. But at the same time, the novelistic is defined in relation to other genres which are openly dialogic - a contrast which imagines the field of discourse as a whole. Reference, summary and citation are ubiquitous features of all language use from anecdote to learning the skills of recitation or précis at school.[56] It is the particularity of the novelistic's dialogic that differentiates it from other dialogic genres. Whilst many genres incorporate other texts and other genres, these are usually kept separate from one another and from authorial discourse through the use of stylistic, typographical and design conventions. Within the novelistic these barriers are broken down and the discourse of the other can be detected within a single sentence or even within the same word.[57] Many forms of writing transmit elements of the heteroglossia, but this is for Bakhtin, a practice governed by an extra-linguistic purpose; the novelistic represents the heteroglossia, it is 'its defining concern' and primary purpose to represent the utterance or utterance type itself (p.338).[58] Transmission is determined by an extra-linguistic purpose, whilst the focus of representation is the utterance or utterance type itself .[59] This definition of the novelistic

also shapes Bakhtin's understanding of novelistic composition, where one of the challenges for the author is 'the problem of representing the image of a language' (p.336). What is emphasised in Bakhtin's account of novelistic production is not only the diversity of language types within the novelistic text but simultaneously the organising, 'orchestrating' role of the author - selecting, combining, inflecting.[60] There is a tension in Bakhtin's writing here between his tendency to represent language and utterance as agencies and his characterisation of the author.[61] Is the heteroglossia and its dynamic the origin of 'a' meaning which the author in some sense expresses? Or does the author have a distinguishable role which cannot be equated with such an idea of expression? There do not seem to be definitive answers. As Hirschkop points out, Bakhtin's 'idealised novelist', particularly in the texts written in the 1930s is also a philosopher and sociologist.[62] No strong sense emerges of a Romantic author who possesses a distinct mode of knowledge which is inherently different and distinguishable from other kinds. Yet, at the same time, Bakhtin's argument that the genres of artistic literature are the most conducive to individual style suggests a differential valuing of literary writing and authorship, more akin to the individual purposiveness of his early work. It is also interesting that this argument is made in 'The Problem of Speech Genres', where the implications of typical genres and typical contexts are being resisted.[63]

More generally, what makes Bakhtin's accounts of dialogic processes so valuable is the variety of modes of intertextual practice he discusses, from its workings as the resisted reality of language practice in the poetic, through the detailed elaborations of double-voiced discourse and the hybrid utterance in *Problems in Doestoevsky's Poetics* and 'Discourse in the Novel', through the various histories of the novelistic utterance which are scattered throughout his writings and are the central component of 'From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse', to his most explicit discussion of genre in narrative terms, in 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel'.[64] A number of the specific definitions and classifications he makes will be taken up in subsequent chapters. What is relevant here, is first, as noted above, the diversity, the many modes of 'being' intertextual, which include the myriad of utterance types which transmit, rather than 'represent' other languages, which do not break down the boundaries between utterances in a single hybrid construction, but seek to retain them. And whilst these are not types of discourse that Bakhtin tends to address in his analyses, their presence as categories makes their elaboration possible. Bakhtin's emphasis does however reflect his preference for and valorisation of certain modes of dialogic being. Like post-structuralism's tendency to valorise modernist writing, he justifies his choices, not as mere matters of aesthetic preference, but in terms of their relation to his definition of translinguistic reality. These are texts which articulate most clearly and explicitly, language 'being' language. This could suggest a more cynical

interpretation of the 'novelness' always inscribed in his theory of language. Does his theory of language exist to 'fit' his theory and preference for the various practices which make up the novelistic. This again might have serious implications for intertextuality as a general theory. But as a criticism it is unfounded, because the dynamic relation between the monologic and the dialogic is so resolutely the condition and process of all meaning. Bakhtin's various histories of the novelistic also suggest a productive refining of his account of textual context. The novelistic explicitly draws on and represents the heteroglossia, but he also identifies a particular zone of the heteroglossia, as an important textual context for the novelistic: its own history.[65] This suggests the ways in which utterances and utterance types tend to shape themselves in and against particular intertextual configurations. At the highest level of abstraction, every utterance is indeed part of a single dialogic chain. But Bakhtin's accounts of the novelistic suggest a way out of this truistic notion, towards a focus on historical patterns of textual relations.[66]

Bakhtin's distinctive contribution is to explicitly formulate how language can at once be mine and the other's. But the terms of his formulation radically transform the concepts of all three terms: a language which is always languages and languages in practice, a speaker who is always-and-already part of a complex web of social interdependencies and a social world which is predicated on division and hierarchy. A contrast with Saussure makes the originality of Bakhtin's formulation clear. Saussure clearly recognises not only the presence of dialects and registers within a national language but also the presence of conflict between literary language and local dialects.[67] He also clearly perceives such phenomena as, in part, political, institutional and historical processes. But this is all part of the terrain of 'external linguistics' that is excluded from his definition of langue. Excluded but also superseded: in effect multiplicity and conflict play no part in the system that is langue. Bakhtin not only extends the boundaries of linguistics but renders the external, the 'excluded' as its centre, proposing a radically different linguistic reality. It is this definition of language as multiple and as practice, as individual and social, that is the precondition of intertextuality, which can itself be understood as the dynamic relation between the two. What Bakhtin does not offer, as discussed above, is a definitive answer to the question of context. His concept of textual context is both rich in itself and suggestive, but his formulations of non-linguistic context are, in the senses considered above, either banal or compromised by a resistance to the implications of the social world that such formulations imply or imagine. It is at this point that the question of the political character of discourse surfaces, as does the type of society that Bakhtin imagines. Two astringent insights into Bakhtin's vision of culture and society are relevant here. The first is from Tony Crowley, who asks why monologism is never a positive value. If historical and political contexts are so important to Bakhtin, 'then it is possible that

in certain contexts a preference for heteroglossia and dialogism would be politically regressive'.[68] Crowley makes an illuminating contrast with Gramsci's insistence on the need for a unifying language. This could expose a final formalism in Bakhtin's theory and a radical weakening of his concept of context which is subordinated to the overwhelmingly positive value which accrues to the dialogic. Second, Graham Pechey argues that Bakhtin only seems able to envisage a dichotomy between official and unofficial culture. 'The roll call of Bakhtin's literary heroes - Dante, Rabelais, Goethe, Dostoevsky - follows the same pattern: all spring from social formations which are either pre-bourgeois or 'world-historically' retarded in being quasi-feudal absolutisms'.[69] The official culture may be feudal or Stalinist but the notion does not capture the complexity of capitalist cultural relations. This goes some way to accounting for Bakhtin's lack of interest in conflict within official or unofficial culture. This too has serious implications for the contexts which are imagined and retreated from in his various writings. These are issues to which I will return.

3. Kristeva: more than neologism

'More than binarism, dialogism may well become the basis of our time's intellectual structure'. This, the penultimate sentence of 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', is one of Kristeva's many avowals of Bakhtin's importance.[70] Here the accent is on his general theoretical value, in particular, the critique of structuralism that dialogism makes possible; but Kristeva also acknowledges his role in her own intellectual development.[71] Her early writings, in particular 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', 'The Ruins of a Poetics' and *Le Texte du Roman* are, in important senses, readings of Bakhtin which draw explicitly on many of his categories: the 'ambivalent' word, the dialogic, the novelistic, the carnivalesque and so on.[72] It is easy, in this context, to view Kristeva's role within this lineage as predominantly that of a circulator and 'translator', whether her Bakhtin is viewed as a productive elaboration and extension, or alternatively as wilful and tendentious.[73] But this would severely underestimate her contribution. Kristeva draws out the full implications of the text as process and production. Her focus on the speaking subject - a psychic subject who is constituted in and against language - aligns subjectivity with textuality, as processes which are co-constitutive. Further, whilst Bakhtin is centrally interested in the shifting hierarchies manifested by the utterances of characters and narrators, Kristeva locates these relations more rigorously within a concept of genre envisaged as the whole patterning of the text.[74] It is with *Le Texte Du Roman*, which explicitly formulates the text as intertextual process and narrative that I will begin.

The title itself marks a displacement: inscribing what is conventionally conceived as a genre - the novel - but at the same time constituting another object within it - text - and suggesting its specificity within the 'genre': *Le Texte du Roman.* At the very beginning of 'The Bounded Text', Kristeva asserts that the object of contemporary semiotics should not be 'a discourse' but 'several semiotic practices' which 'operate through and across language' (my emphasis).[75] The immediately opens up a different way of conceiving the text. A strong stylistic contrast is produced between 'discourse' and 'practices', the former, singular and given, the latter, multiple and dynamic. The 'several' also marks a modification of Bakhtin's dialogic. Asked to clarify the difference between Bakhtin's dialogic and her own concept of intertextuality in a 1985 interview, Kristeva drew a distinction between the dialogic as the 'intersection of two voices in direct or indirect discourse' and intertextuality as 'the intersection of a number of voices, of a number of textual interventions'.[76] In Kristeva's definition, the intersections of meaning which produce the text are multiplied and released from the intimations of a dialogue between two speakers. Kristeva's neologism therefore marks a distinctive displacement of the dialogic, definitively formulating the speaking subject within the text and giving a new emphasis to the relations between practices: the text as process or productivity.

> In this perspective, the text is defined as a trans-linguistic apparatus that redistributes the order of language by relating communicative speech, which aims to inform directly, to different kinds of anterior or synchronic utterances. The text is therefore a *productivity* ... ('The Bounded Text' p.36).
>
> The novel, seen as a text, is a semiotic practice in which the synthesised patterns of several utterances can be read (p.37).

'Utterance' clearly invokes Bakhtin and it subsequently becomes clear that an utterance can be an utterance-type or genre.[77] The text of the novel is not singular but plural: a historical genre conceived as the intersection of a multiplicity of utterances and utterance types. At the same time, text is also a critical concept ('seen as a text'), a perspective which makes it possible to theorise the multiplicity and productivity of the novel. It is the transforming relations between 'several semiotic practices' which produce meaning and it is this process of transformation which Kristeva calls intertextuality.

> The text is therefore a productivity, and this means: first, that its relationship to the language in which it is situated is redistributive (destructive-constructive), and hence can be better approached through logical categories rather than linguistic categories; and second, that it is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a given text, several utterances taken from other texts, intersect and neutralise each other (p.36).

The distinctive accent in Kristeva's definition is on the productivity or process that is text: the text as permutation or, as it is insistently iterated in *Le Texte Du Roman*, 'transformation'.[78] 'Transformation' which is borrowed from the lexicon of transformational grammar, mainly acts here as a polemical retort to structuralism which posits the text as a realisation of a pre-existing structure, and in particular structuralist narratology.[79] Bakhtin, hovering between a genre-governed typicality and a situation-oriented uniqueness, and whose dialogic analyses explore the relations between distinguishable utterances, cannot fully draw out the implications of the text as transformation (a 'redistribution' of language which is 'destructive-constructive').

Antoine de La Sale's *Jehan de Saintré*, a proto-novel written in 1456, forms the basis for Kristeva's analysis in *Le Texte du Roman*. Her interest is in the processes by which the novel as text resignifies meanings or utterances from the 'General Text (Culture)' and how these various utterances operate together within the text ('The Bounded Text', p.36).[80] She identifies a range of contemporary and anterior texts and genres present in the text: moral precepts, Latin citations (themselves from a wide range of genres: historical, biographical, philosophical, political, religious) epic poetry, courtly love poetry, and 'blazons' or street cries.[81] All have a particular function and circulation within the General Text or culture and identifiable speaker-addressee relations. But their conjunction in a new textual space produces new meanings: these genres are resignified. What also emerges here as distinctive and contrastive with Bakhtin is the relations between utterances within the text as whole.

> ... laudatory utterances, known as blazons were abundant in France during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They come from a communicative discourse, shouted in public squares and designed to give direct information to the crowd on wars (the number of soldiers, their direction, armaments, etc.), or on the marketplace (the quality and price of merchandise) ('The Bounded Text', p.53).

In the novel, these cries are transformed to function as a means of description 'of either objects (clothes, gifts and weapons) or events (the departure of troops, banquets and combats)' (p.52). The extra-novelistic function of blazons - as direct information - is refunctioned in the novelistic context to produce a series of circumlocutions or 'deviations' from the story' (p.52). They interrupt its unfolding and are also 'complete in themselves', introducing a distinctive temporal rhythm, repetition (such descriptions recur 'periodically'), into the narrative (p.52). The blazon also articulates a new set of knowledges and values, those of the emerging marketplace, which compete with and challenge another set of knowledges and values present in the proto-novel: the sacred knowledges presented as citation of religious texts, usually in Latin. The proto-novel is not only a specific plurality of utterances rather than a single genre but a space of transformation, of resignification.

This still leaves the question of what governs or orders this process of transformation. The intertextuality of *Jehan de Saintré* is not the outcome of a random process of appropriation from the General Text, any more than the relations of signification between utterances within it are haphazard. Both are governed by a relation between two conflicting ideologies. Kristeva is not content to leave ideology as an abstract force which shapes meaning, her interest is in process: how does ideology work to produce meaning? Early in 'The Bounded Text', Kristeva identifies the interest of *Jehan de Saintré* as its 'transitory structure', located within and between two theories of meaning, one sacred, the other secular: the ideologemes of the symbol and the sign (p.42). Kristeva develops the concept of the ideologeme from Bakhtin and Medvedev's *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, where the ideologeme registers both the literary text's imbrication in ideologies - 'the literary reflects only the ideological horizon, which itself is only the refracted reflection of real existence' - and the specific work that the literary does with ideologies: literature is not the 'simple servant and transmitter' of ideologies.[82] In Kristeva, as for Bakhtin and Medvedev, the ideologeme is a unit of ideology which confirms the relations between the subject and her/his object of knowledge.[83] This clarifies the sense of Kristeva's section heading 'The Utterance as Ideologeme' ('The Bounded Text', p.36). The utterance is always-already ideological as it is always spoken and spoken from a particular social and historical place: there is no linguistic meaning which precedes ideology.[84]

In *Le Texte du Roman*, Kristeva examines two theories of meaning, that of the sign and the symbol as ideologemes, identifying their meanings within the General Text, and the work they do and that is done on them within the novel.[85] She argues that it is the emergence of the sign - understood here in broadly Saussurean terms - that makes the novel form possible. Most simply, it represents the beginning of a secularisation of meaning. The meaning of the symbol is derived exclusively from the universal that it marks which always fixes and predetermines it: the symbol is believed to mean what it means prior to any instance of use. Its authority is educed from its connection to the transcendent sphere that the universal occupies. By contrast, the ideologeme of the sign derives it meaning and authority from the singularity of the object it represents and from its conjunction and combination with other signs. The symbol's logic of combination is disjunctive - contraries of all kinds must be kept separate. The sign's logic is non-disjunctive - contraries can be kept separate or conjoined ('The Bounded Text', pp.38-41). The novel is the first genre to be organised by the ideologeme of the sign which, Kristeva argues, challenged and replaced the symbol between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. But although it resituates meaning in a monist framework, it also absorbs and transforms aspects of the symbol. Specifically, the logic of the sign recodes genres which developed under the ideologeme of the symbol to obey its own logic. Courtly love poetry is one

example. The figure of the Lady, exclusively emblematic of virtue in a disjunctive arrangement is, in the proto-novel, rendered ambiguous: she is also duplicitous. This has important implications for the narrative. The eponymous hero reads the Lady as alternatively vicious and virtuous, but he cannot recognise what the narrator does: that the Lady is both. This becomes the source of Saintré's 'defeat'.

> Saintré's defeat - and the end of the narrative - are due to this error of substituting an utterance accepted as disjunctive and uni-vocal for the non-disjunctive function of the utterance (p.44).

The logic of the emergent sign (and its relation to the symbol) is, for Kristeva, articulated at every level of the novel and makes possible the type of story and narration, the characterology and figures that are typical of the novel.

> All figures found in the novel (as heir to the carnival) that can be read in two ways are organised on the model of this function [i.e. non-disjunction] ruses, treason, foreigners, androgynes, utterances that can be doubly interpreted or have double destinations ... The trajectory of the novel would be impossible without this non-disjunctive function (p.43, my [ ] parenthesis).

Important here is the emphasis on particular types of action and character. Indeed for Kristeva, it is the logic of the sign that makes the development of a realist characterology possible. Epic, by contrast, ordered by the logic of the symbol 'can ... engender neither personalities nor psychologies' (p.49). But this non-disjunction is itself constrained by the manner in which the authorial position is constructed. The narrative is itself pre-programmed: its apparent arbitrary ending is an illusion.

> The text opens with an introduction that shapes (shows) the entire itinerary of the novel. La Sale knows what his text is ('three stories') and for what reason it exists (a message to Jean D'Anjou). ... All that remains to tell, that is, to fill in, to detail, what was already conceptualised, known, before any contact between pen and paper 'the story as word upon word it proceeds' (p.42).

Just as the symbol's meaning is always-already given, so finally is the narrative that the novel tells. The ideologeme of the sign, by transferring the symbol's authority to the implied author limits the openness of the novelistic text. The sign, because it does not fully break with the symbol, enacts a closure on meaning by locating its source in the author. The sign's logic therefore does not only impact on narrative, it shapes a distinctive figure: the author of the novel. This also marks a break with Bakhtin's author as orchestrator, who is ambiguously both within and without the text. In Kristeva a distinctive authorial subject is constituted by and in the genre of the novel.

The proto-novel therefore articulates a conflict within the General Text of the period between sacred and secular culture. The novel both appropriates congruent practices -

the blazon for example - and recodes opposing practices of representation according to its secularising logic. This contrast and conflict between secular and sacred is an epochally formulated version of a familiar narrative which identifies a set of contexts which are seen to shape 'the rise of the novel': the development of a print culture, and more generally 'a culture of exchange' or nascent capitalism, secularisation and the cancellation and preservation of divine authority in 'man', most particularly in the figure of the author and so on.[86] It is rendered unfamiliar by its transposition into the domain of discourse - these contexts are formulated as textual (the General Text of history and society). Like Voloshinov and Bakhtin, Kristeva formulates a powerful concept of textual context. Text, conceived as intertextuality, becomes a critical concept and perspective, a way of understanding the dynamic relations between any genre or text and the General Text. The General Text is the constituting context for the novel, but the novel becomes a constituent in the General Text.

There seems to be a problem, however, with the way that Kristeva aligns symbol and sign with sacred and secular - it seems too convenient, too ready a fit. Leaving aside the question of historical evidence (which lies beyond the scope of this discussion), symbol and sign sometimes appear to express the sacred and the secular, an expressivism which is masked (though it may also be undone) by the insistence on the work that the ideologemes of sign (and symbol) do on the novel. Can the sign plausibly be conceived for example as the exclusive precondition of 'modern', realist character? Can all genres be typologised as being ordered exclusively by one of two theories of meaning?[87]

The tenuousness of this logic is further suggested by another text of Kristeva's, 'The Adolescent Novel', presented at a conference in 1987, seventeen years after *Le Texte du Roman*.[88] Kristeva discusses the same proto-novel, but now she insistently repeats its full title *Petit Jehan de Saintré* (which is given only in the bibliography of *Le Texte du Roman*).[89] Here the text is of interest as a demonstration of the 'adolescent economy of writing' that, she argues, orders much of novelistic production.[90] No mention is made of her earlier text or the ordering, transforming logic of the sign. Indeed, what is shown to organise utterance relations here is a particular kind of psychic economy. The ambivalence of the lady's utterance and its effects are now conceived as Jehan's moving away from incestuous desire (hence the importance of 'petit' - he is a pageboy) to identification: he learns to speak the double language of the lady (p.13).[91] This, at the very least, suggests a weakness of connection between symbol and sign and the ordering and functioning of utterances, which are revealed as disposable in their very absence.

'The Adolescent Novel' also illustrates Kristeva's abiding preoccupation with the speaking subject as psychic subject. In 'The Ruins of a Poetics', she suggests that whilst Bakhtin makes 'no mention of Freud ... [he] was to study the "word" as a

territory in which instances of discourse confront each other, "I's" which speak. "Dialogic" is the term which indicates the discourse belongs doubly to an "I" and to the other'.[92] Whilst Bakhtin's discussion of genre implies that the subject is, in part at least, constituted in language, this is not explicitly developed. Kristeva's insertion of a psychoanalytically conceived subject into the signifying process is a distinctive extension, creating a further tension in the relation between language as mine and the other's. At the same time, this focus on the subject is conceived as a political challenge to linguistics, including structural linguistics, which has limited the implications of the sociality of language and in so doing,

> restricts the value of its discovery to the field of practices which do no more than subserve the principle of social cohesions, of the social contract ... a semiotics that records the systematic, systematising or informational aspect of signifying practices.[93]

By focusing on the communicative and systematic aspects of signifying systems, semiotics tends to ignore the relations between the speaking subject and signifying system: either the subject is ignored altogether or assumed as a 'transcendental ego'.[94] Such a semiotics can only imagine practices which confirm a consensual notion of the subject and social relations. In 'The Ethics of Linguistics' and 'The System and the Speaking Subject', Kristeva develops a notion of 'poetic language' which challenges linguistics as it is currently constituted. Originating in Jakobson's definition, which she describes as the 'reordering of everyday communication', the poetic is what is conventionally excluded from linguistics.[95] Kristeva asserts a political potential in making central what lies outside the boundary or on the periphery: 'language, and thus sociability, are defined by boundaries admitting of upheaval, dissolution and transformation'.[96] Kristeva reconceptualises poetic language in terms of the relation between the subject - conceived in psychoanalytic terms - and the system of signification. In poetic language, she identifies a dialectic tension between the body as it attempts and desires to represent itself as rhythm (fundamentally incompatible with the unified subject that language as system and law proposes), and the ego, the 'I' that seeks and desires expression and representation 'within the space of language, crown, system: no longer rhythm, but sign, word, structure, contract, constraint'.[97] In both texts, Kristeva examines this necessary conflict as semiotic productivity, returning to and refining it in her exploration of modernist poetics: *La Révolution du Langage Poétique*.[98] There the poetic is elaborated as 'the inclusion of the semiotic in the symbolic',[99] where the semiotic is no longer a practice of signification but the trace of a 'pre-representative production' which precedes the subject's entry into the symbolic and the division and unity it insists upon.[100] It is a work without value which is 'distinct ... from exchange'.[101] The symbolic is the 'domain of

*inter*subjectivity, thus of all human relations'.[102] What is crucial here is the relationship between the semiotic and the symbolic. Crucially, the semiotic does not 'know' language as law. This is the precondition of its politically transgressive potential. It is not the other of law in the sense of being defined by it. But this is only the precondition of its radical potential. Because the semiotic does not know law, it cannot challenge it and in this sense be constituted by it. What gives the semiotic its disruptive potential is its manifestation in writing in and through the symbolic. 'The order of language has the role of enabling as well as holding in place that which both threatens and makes it possible'.[103] This also suggests the political force that Kristeva attributes to the symbolic, how difficult it is to challenge. The relations between the semiotic and the symbolic suggest some of the ways in which Kristeva's account of intertextuality develops its 'intrapsychic aspects'. It introduces another temporality - the psychic temporality of the subject - into the already complex historical time of the text, a temporality which is also inscribed rhetorically as division and conflict. It also suggests that the contingencies of textual production are not only shaped by textual repertoires which inscribe the subject in society and history, but by the subject's psychodynamic relations with those discourses. We may know a language (in Bakhtin's sense) and be pragmatically fluent in it, yet the psychodynamics of a particular context may render us incapable of speaking it - to take one obvious example.

Kristeva's contribution to the lineage of theories considered here is threefold. First, she pluralises the doubling of language that Bakhtin's dialogic implies, and extends the theoretical force and potential of the text as intersection and permutation. Through this emphasis on process she avoids the problems inherent in Bakhtin's unresolved insistence on the utterance as 'unique' and 'typical'. For Kristeva the text is indeed unique and typical (though neither of these terms belong to her lexicon), it is like those utterances within the General Text that it incorporates, but unlike them in the sense that it transforms them, figuring them into new patterns and logics. Second, Kristeva's theorisation of the speaking subject who is inscribed and produced within the text as intertextuality, who is moreover conceptualised psychoanalytically, means that psychic division and conflict are rhetorically inscribed in the text and its process of production, just as other social conflicts are. Third, Kristeva's interest in narrative (whether as the residue and critique of structuralist narratology or, as later, as a process understood predominantly in psychoanalytic terms) suggests the possibility of thinking genres, not only as a plurality and transformation of texts and text-types, but as sets of narrative possibilities, which enable a focus on the patternings of the text as a whole.

4. The strengths and weaknesses of intertextual theories of production

At the beginning of this chapter, I proposed that this lineage of intertextual theories had a theoretical value, actual and potential, that is distinct from other attempts to figure meaning as work done in and through the already-written. Here, I will accent this value and its particularity, and, in the process, consider to what extent the weaknesses in intertextual theories of reception are consequent upon problems within these theories. As I argued above, the return to intertextual theories of production is necessary because of certain fundamental problems in contemporary formulations of intertextual interpretation or reading. Specifically, I identified a strong inclination to collapse reading and writing - an equation which makes it impossible to theorise the relations between production and interpretation; a more general vagueness around (and I use 'around' deliberately) the types of process involved; and the dominant tendency to understand intertextuality exclusively as unfixity and instability in terms which license reader autonomy. The first question which inevitably suggests itself is this. Is there an equivalent collapsing the other way: do intertextual theories of production posit writing as reading? The answer must be no. For although in Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, writing (or speaking) always involves the imagining or constitution of a reader (hearer) - clearly important for any theorisation of intertextual interpretation - and although writing is clearly a process which includes reading, a formulation which is most explicit in Kristeva and in the central role that Bakhtin assigns to evaluation within meaning production, there is no breaking down of the one into the other.[104] Bakhtin's refusal to grant the reader (however 'active') rights over the meanings of a text, his problematic suggestion that although readings of the text change, these are in some sense always possibilities that the text and the author-orchestrator licenses, clearly differentiates writing from reading - though not in terms which I would wish to pursue.[105] As with Barthes, these accounts of meaning draw attention to the congruences between reading and writing, not their identity. And these have significant value for trying to think intertextual interpretation. The central place of an always social value within textual production is especially suggestive for thinking about the role of evaluation in the processes of reading and its relation to interpretation. But there is nothing in this trajectory which dissolves writing into reading, paving the way for the reversal which is a contemporary commonplace. The writings of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva offer the possibility, at least, of theorising the relations between production and interpretation.

Second, within this trajectory there is a strong commitment to identifying and explaining the processes of textual production. In the introduction, I suggested that with the exception of Riffaterre, intertextual theories of reading shared a vagueness about process - beyond the important assumption that reading was not a simple decoding process. This cannot be said of the writings of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and

Kristeva. The various attempts to theorise the processes of meaning are not without their problems, but this should not be conflated with a flight from the question. In the most general terms, these accounts of textual production all develop out of an explicit theorisation of language. An obvious point, but one that is no means shared by all 'intertextual' theories. Thus, whilst the concept of constitutive textual relations is the strong presupposition of Harold Bloom and Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, and, to a lesser degree, Elaine Showalter, in none of these is the textual defined in relation to an explicit theory of language which purports to be explanatory.[106] If a limit needs to be set to what is classified as an intertextual theory, and I would strongly argue that it does, then the presence within it of an explicit account of meaning in general seems to be a good place to start.

The most significant contribution to the question of process is, without doubt, the ways in which text-context relations are imagined and, in particular, the development of a concept of textual context. Intertextuality is not only a theory of text and textual production but textual context. Context can, of course, be rendered as anything from an irrelevance to fundamentally constitutive; and its relations to text can be figured in terms of parity and disparity, in various forms and to various degrees. In Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva context is formulated as textual (predominantly at least) and constitutive of text. Text and context are necessarily bound in a dynamic and historical process: texts become contexts. The text is at once inseparable from context, present within it and constitutive of it, and distinct: it permutes the textual material that it configures. This broad outline is shared by intertextual theories of reception but there also important differences which also distinguish this lineage from other intertextual theories of production. Here, the complex chains of verbal interaction, the heteroglossia and the General Text are all concepts of context which articulate the contestation between dominant and subordinate social forces (even though in Bakhtin and Kristeva this relation tends to be over-schematised), making context multiple and socially conflictual. This distinguishes it from Riffaterre's formulation where the relations between context and text are inscribed in terms of literary criteria (convention and innovation) which exclude the social from textual production. But it is also this emphasis on 'the text of history and society' that inscribes an important difference between this trajectory and Derrida's iterable sign. For whilst the argument that citationality is the general and necessary condition of language conceived as writing is formally congruent with the already-written that is so central to Bakhtin and Kristeva, citationality for him is neither the production nor the effect of conflictual social relations and socially contested meanings.[107]

A much more generalised division emerges in the different ways in which text-context relations are conceived as historical. That meaning is historical is a commonplace of most intertextual theories of production and reception. It is the

meanings of 'historical' that requires attention. In the writings of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, the sense emerges - often implicit and never fully explicated - that meaning is complexly historical.[108] Voloshinov's distinction between immediate and 'broader' contexts, Bakhtin's narratives of the historical forms of the dialogic, and Kristeva's insistence on text and culture as composed of both contemporary and 'anterior' signifying practices, all open up the possibility of theorising context and text as complexly historical. These formulations therefore challenge the 'localising' tendencies in new historicist reading practices with their strong tendency to presuppose the absoluteness otherness of text and reader. Too often, intertextual theories of reception tend to conceive history and therefore meaning exclusively in terms of change, in the process losing sight of the ways in which historical process is always also continuity. The 'inter-hyphen-textual', which named or not has had such impact in cultural studies, is a strong instance of this context-as-change formula which authorises the claim that the text has no determinate meaning in itself. Change and unfixity are prioritised. The banalisation of history within intertextual accounts of reception is licensed by a text-becomes-text-becomes-context narrative, but it is more forcefully shaped by a more general theoretical tendency - the war on 'nature' and universalism - which often seems to make historicising continuities unnecessary or suspect. The propensity to focus almost exclusively on one modality of a process is also strongly marked in the ways the production of meaning comes to be conceived almost exclusively as a process of unfixing. De Certeau and Chartier's metaphorics of the text as a plethora of fragments invoke incompleteness and multiplicity to shatter any concept of the text as a unity definitively aligned with the forces of authority and determination.[109] In the writings of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva meaning is always understood as a process of both fixing and unfixing. Voloshinov's identification of the process whereby a dominant social formation seeks to reproduce and generalise its values, Bakhtin's account of the role of 'literary' language and Kristeva's account of the dynamics between semiotic and symbolic all illustrate how meaning is, within this lineage, always a dynamic between fixing and unfixing. Consensual and authoritative meanings are always part of textual production, just as those which contest them are. Dominant and subordinate social forces are always involved in both processes. The importance of genre in these theories acknowledges the relative stability of both texts and contexts, even though this is sometimes resisted, most clearly by Bakhtin. Finally, this lineage makes it possible to develop a graduated formulation of the permutation that text is, from minor variation to radical transformation: change itself is not monovalent.

Bakhtin's concept of the heteroglossia and Kristeva's General Culture are ways of conceiving textual context which necessarily bind both text and (textual) context to history and society as a whole. The strongest contrast here is with Harold Bloom's

concept of context as a specifically literary corpus which is constituted and reconstituted by the desires and anxieties of the individual writer, so rendering the non-literary an inert factor in literary textual production.[110] Indeed this insistence on context and culture as the totality of signifying practices and their relations, is a powerful counter to any cultural theory which constructs an unbreachable boundary between one set of signifying practices - identified as literary or 'popular', or in terms of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity or nationality - and others, asserting as it does the constitutive relationality of social difference.[111] An exhaustive elaboration of the meanings of a particular text within the field of signification as a whole is clearly impossible in practical terms. But a broad commitment to recognising the place of texts and genres within the general pattern of cultural relations and in particular their status and value is of central importance to thinking about interpretative processes. If Bakhtin's discussions of novelistic tradition are developed further, it becomes possible to see how certain patterns of textual configuration are much more or less probable or possible than others. This in turn has implications for thinking about the distribution of knowledges within and across reading constituencies and why certain knowledges are more or less likely to be mobilised in reading.

These theories also share a valuable and rigorous concept of theoretical practice. Chartier's recasting of multiplicity and permutation as fragmentation is also a weak form of a much more general tendency: to turn what is, most explicitly in Kristeva, a self-conscious and explicit theoretical practice into the general condition of all reading. In the introduction, I noted that the modal status of reading in many intertextual accounts was frequently unclear: is this how we do read, might read, should read? Thus, whilst for Barthes, 'writing' (écriture) and the writerly are critical concepts which expose the practices of filiation or the limited plural of realism, Fiske, translating the writerly into the 'producerly' in his discussion of television, renders it a straightforward empirical category, so making the televisual text always radically open to any producer-viewer's transformations.[112] What is lost here is the ideological work that author, genre, tradition and so on do to delimit and attempt to fix meaning. Contrast this with Kristeva's focus on the delimiting effects of the author-subject produced by the early novel or Bakhtin's account of the true and unreal character of the forces that seek to unify the heteroglossia. In much contemporary literary and cultural theory it is as if these mythologies, once identified as such, cease to exist.

At the most general level, this trajectory understands theoretical practice as critical. This is most explicit in Kristeva.

> At every moment of its elaboration, semiology thinks its object, its instrument and their relations, thus thinks itself, and becomes, in turning back upon itself the theory of the science that it is. This means that semiology is in every case a re-evaluation of its object and/or its models, a *critique* of its models (thus of the

> sciences from which they are borrowed) and of itself (as a system of constant truths). [113]

A theoretical practice should itself be a 'productivity', remaking its objects, itself and the relations between them. Crucial here is the elaboration of a theory which can challenge and displace the very ground of its operation. Kristeva's casting of poetic language as a theory of language, her centring of it against the languages of 'communication' which structural and generative linguistics predict and constitute is, in this respect, exemplary. This understanding of theoretical practice, (present in different ways in Voloshinov and Bakhtin) is a strong counter to many contemporary invocations of intertextuality, where a particular signifying practice is evidenced as the exemplification of intertextual or, more broadly post-structural theories of language. Thus, so-called quintessentially post-modern practices such as the pastiche of various historical registers in literary fiction, or electronic hypertext are offered up as the evidence or 'proof' (positivistic) of the validity of intertextual theories. George P. Landow's work is a striking instance of this tendency which once more banalises the relations between theory and practice, where the discrepancy that makes Bakhtin and Kristeva's work so rewarding is lost and 'theory' and practice simply license and exemplify one another.[114]

All this said, it is also clear that this trajectory does not offer either a complete or wholly plausible account of textual production. There are two types of problem. The first, focus on the processes of writing or textual production as intertextual, the second, on the broader contours of intertextuality as a theory of culture as process. Many of these issues will be taken up and discussed in chapter three but some pointers can be laid down in passing. First, whilst Kristeva, above all, is explicitly interested in theorising the subject, as a psychic subject, and more generally as a social subject within language, there is little interest here in specifying context from the standpoint of the writing or speaking subject, the subset of textual knowledge that is hers and how this positions her within the General Culture and, in particular, its dominant values. Second, whilst the concept of the intertextual word indeed defines the minimal unit of discourse, its relation to the discourse categories which are attenuated from it - the 'single' utterance and the intersection of utterances that constitute a larger and more complete text - is problematic. The word as the minimal unit of meaning is clearly usually more multiple and more unfixed when it is contextualised in relation to the totality of the heteroglossia, than when it is contextualised within an utterance or a text. The relations between word, utterance and text cannot be fully grasped by attenuation and correspondence. The delimitations of meaning that these categories of discourse can exert on one another also need to be taken account of. Third, whilst Bakhtin, in his discussions of the hybrid utterance, demonstrates a strong interest in what might be

termed the relative signifying force that different utterances have within a text, this is neither fully explicitated or developed in relation to genre. Genres intersect and permute one another within a text but usually one is dominant in terms of the meanings it delimits.[115] Gothic is a frequent visitor to nineteenth century realist novels, but it is usually subordinated to the demands of realist representation. When Pip encounters the apparitional Miss Haversham for the first time, we never really hesitate between a natural and supernatural explanation of who or what he is 'really' seeing, to follow Todorov's definition.[116] Subordinated but also transformed. Gothic functions here to reinforce the 'plausible' psychology that is central to realism: the child who is socially out of his depth, the embittered jilted bride. A focus on the relative signifying force of utterances within the text can open up further ways of thinking about how textual relations are ordered within the text.

The second set of problems, which concern intertextuality as a theory of culture, mark out a broader and more diffuse terrain but one that is also highly pertinent to theorising interpretation. The epigraph from Barthes which began this chapter has a double intent. Within this lineage there is a marked interest in linguistic and textual form, from the modalities of reported 'speech' to the narrative patternings of particular genres which is oriented by a critical engagement with Russian Formalism. But attention to form is never an end in itself, nor an autonomous answer to questions about the dynamics and distinctiveness of literary or poetic language; it is a key means by which textual relations can be shown to inscribe social relations, conceived historically. In this sense it can be said that for Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, a lot of formalism brings history 'back' (if they ever left it behind in the first place). This is not an uncontroversial statement, particularly with respect to Kristeva. Simon Dentith, for example, contrasting Kristeva with Bakhtin argues that she 'effectively deracinates the signifying process', making meaning the consequence of 'purely textual operations independent of historical location'.[117] Yet it is difficult to equate these 'purely textual operations' with the historical contexts so strongly marked in *Le Texte du Roman*, or the critique that Kristeva, through her reading of Bakhtin, makes of Russian Formalism and her affirmation of the value of what she calls Bakhtin's 'historical poetics'.[118]

There is however a sense in which a certain formalism can be seen to weaken the claim of intertextuality to be a historical theory of textual production. The valorisation of certain signifying practices by Bakhtin and Kristeva sometimes take priority and set limits to the ways in which text-context relations can be theorised. Crowley's argument that Bakhtin is incapable of imagining a historical context in which monologic practices might be politically progressive can also be applied to Kristeva's strong privileging of modernist writing. And indeed, some of the gendered and post-colonial readings of intertextuality duplicate the same error, identifying monologism exclusively with

patriarchal or colonial practices.[119] What is at issue here is not the autonomy of 'textual operations' but the theoretical effects of a valorisation which can render context theoretically subordinate to text.

The second problem is that none of these writers consider the ways in which institutions shape signifying practices and their relations, or make any attempt to theorise institutions. This is perhaps a more permissible absence in Voloshinov given the explicitly programmatic form of the book. Pechey's contrast of Bakhtin with Foucault exposes the former's seeming unwillingness or inability to theorise 'the institutional sites in which the complex relations of discourse and power are actually negotiated'.[120] Kristeva's position is equally problematic. In 'The Ethics of Linguistics', she declares that 'the term "poetry" has meaning only insofar as it makes this kind of studies acceptable to various educational and cultural institutions' (p.25), before proposing her own definition. This at once acknowledges the role of institutions in the production of meaning and value, and dispatches it. What is the relation between poetry (and Literature more generally) as it is constituted by various institutions and her definition of its practice? Willing to acknowledge the limits to meaning that particular genres produce, she does not explore the boundaries that institutions establish between clusters of signifying practices. Working with a literary corpus, she does not, as John Frow argues, take account of 'the mediation of the literary system' which significantly constrains the possibilities of the literary in any context where Literature is an established site of value.[121] This weakness marks a difference from a number of accounts of intertextual reception, where focus on reading practices and/or reading formations marks just such an interest in the institutional contexts of reading.

In the introduction I noted how 'naturally' certain categories and practices asserted themselves in the encounter with an established literary text - how readily, for example, the inscription of an author entered the analysis of *Emma*. The author-function proposes a particular set of textual knowledges and textual relations: the other novels of Austen, the classification of *Emma* as a 'mature' work, biographical knowledge and so on.[122] Beyond this, the literary status of the novel proposes various relations with other literary texts. Like Great *Expectations*, *Emma* is a bildungsroman, a genre to be sure, but one with unimpeachable literary credentials, and there are many other possibilities. At the furthest limits of classification lies a relation with the literary as a whole: we may note in *Emma* , the Shakespearean comedy staples of playacting, deception and misunderstanding. But at the same time of course the literary sets boundaries to these knowledges and relations. We are far less likely to interpretatively configure *Emma* with the contemporary Hollywood genre of romantic comedy (despite contemporary Hollywood adaptations of Austen, including *Emma*).[123] Various criteria of difference enter to render such relations less plausible: medium (but what about

Shakespeare?), too temporally distant from one another (but what about Shakespeare?). And therefore, whilst it is, of course, possible to construct contexts where such a patterning of textual relations was mobilised and indeed legitimated - a pedagogic context is one - such an intertextual context evidently has less force, is much less likely to be stabilised and reproduced as an interpretative framework within the General Text of contemporary Britain, than Austen's literary intertextual location. Just as the relations and non-relations between texts are ordered in the General Culture by a whole range of institutional practices, so they are ordered in the form of the textual knowledges of readers.

The recast formalism of Bakhtin and Kristeva and the general absence of interest in institutional questions, which have particular pertinence to the reproduction of cultural value are indeed problems - and ones to which I will return. But what I believe this return to this lineage of theories has demonstrated is that there is little to encourage the dissolution of reading into writing, the general vagueness about interpretative processes, the almost exclusive fixation on unfixity and the libertarian reader that are the dominants of intertextual theories of reading. Such positions and arguments are not logically consequent upon the writings of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, although there are certain ambiguities which can license or legitimate such developments. But at the same time, what this return also indicates is that a fully explanatory account of the processes of intertextual interpretation cannot exclusively be theorised out of this lineage. As noted above, there are weaknesses and gaps in the accounts of process which cannot be generated or developed from these accounts. There is another tradition, equally committed to explaining the always context-bound character of meaning, one that focuses on the relations between the production of meaning and its interpretation, a tradition to which I will now turn: pragmatics.

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[1] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, (London: Vintage, 1993), p.112.

[2] *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, edited by Michael Worton and Judith Stills, pp.2-10.

[3] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp.8-12.

[4] *Intertextuality*, p.11. Allen is aware that this narrative is 'not without its problems' (p10), but that 'it is true enough to say that the basis upon which many of the major theories of intertextuality are developed take us back to Saussure's notion of the differential sign' (p.11). 'True enough': the anxiety here is organised by the discursive demands of the field - Saussure is always the beginning for contemporary literary theoretical concepts - but also by its pedagogic intentions, offering to the novice-reader yet another summary of certain key Saussurean definitions and distinctions.

[5] The classical narrative mentioned above makes no mention of Voloshinov and it is also clear from the exclusive focus on dialogism and monologism that Bakhtin is not an inclusive signifier for the Bakhtin circle (pp.15-16).

[6] Particular texts and formulations will be discussed below.

[7] V. N. Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* , (Cambridge MA: Harvard, 1986).

[8] On 'Kristeva's Bakhtin', see Jean Jacques Lecercle on the imposture of reading in *Interpretation as Pragmatics* , pp. 94-107.

[9] Nor is this an attempt to distinguish Bakhtin from the book's explicit Marxism. Ken Hirschkop draws attention to the political charge of the authorship question in his bibliographical essay in *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory* , edited by Hirschkop and David Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp.195-212. 'In the 1970s and 1980s, in the United States and England, it [i.e. the authorship question] clearly mattered ... , as the case against Bakhtin's authorship of the disputed texts often formed part of a larger argument as to why Bakhtin could not be a Marxist like Voloshinov and Medvedev', p.196.

[10] Chris Weedon, Andrew Tolson and Frank Mort, 'Introduction to Language Studies at the Centre' in *Culture, Media, Language,* edited by Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe and Paul Willis (London: Routledge, 1980), pp.177-185, pp.182-183. The Language and Ideology group was formed in 1975. See also Fredric Jameson's review in *Style* 8, 3 (1974), pp.535-543.

[11] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 1977).

[12] *Marxism and Literature*, p.35.

[13] See *Marxism and Literature*, p.42.

[14] John Ellis, 'Ideology and Subjectivity' in *Culture, Media, Language*, pp.186-194, pp.192-3.

[15] Ladislav Matejka points out that the interest in dialogue and verbal interaction was not itself new and was shared by the Vossler school (which Voloshinov is highly critical of, in particular Leo Spitzer). What is distinctive is Voloshinov's formulation. See 'On the first Russian Prolegomena to Semiotics', Appendix 1 in *Marxism*, pp.170-1.

[16] *Marxism*, pp. 17-18

[17] For Voloshinov, 'individualist-subjectivism' is exemplified by Wilhelm Von Humboldt and currently incarnated in the work of the Vossler School (pp.50-51). Saussure's work on language is 'the most striking expression' of abstract-objectivism 'at the present time' (p.58) but Voloshinov traces its philosophical origins to Cartesianism and Leibniz's conception of universal grammar.

[18] To avoid an excessive proliferation of footnotes, the key texts of the main protagonists discussed in this and the subsequent chapters will be referenced in the body text.

[19] *Marxism*, p.23. What also emerges here is a difficulty about the relations between language and the 'social existence' of which it is a part, signalled by the lexeme 'refraction'. Refraction is explicitly distinguished from reflection ('not merely reflected' - my emphasis), which seems to suggests the transformative work that language and ideologies do, and is in keeping with the anti-mechanistic project of the text. But the variation of the reflection metaphor also retains the sense of language practice as an image of social relations which is less conducive to a transformative definition of language practice. This creates an ambiguity which is never resolved. Various critics have tried to resolve this ambiguity. Raymond Williams, in *Marxism and Literature*, not only emphasises, quite correctly, the rigorous materialism of Voloshinov's definition of language practice, (*Marxism and Literature*, p.38) but chooses to emphasise the transformative 'version'. This 'resolution' is achieved by Williams's extended discussion of Voloshinov's distinction between signal and sign (pp.38-40), discussed further on in this chapter. But whilst Williams's discussion is valuable in emphasising the implications of this distinction for understanding the history of language, it does not adequately engage with the determinations of the contexts which 'transform' signal into sign. Further, the discussion of Voloshinov is so strongly directed against Saussure that the two become binarised in terms which finally seem to evade the ambiguity of 'refraction'.

[20] 'Any theory of expression inevitably presupposes that the expressible is something that can somehow take shape and exist apart from expression; that it exists first in one form and then switches to another. This would have to be the case; otherwise if the expressible were to exist from the very start in the form of expression, with quantitative transition between the two elements (in the sense of clarification, differentiation, and the like) the whole theory of expression would collapse. (*Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, p.84 - my emphasis]

[21] See, for example, p.98.

[22] Voloshinov argues that 'in certain crucial respects paragraphs are analogous to exchanges in dialogue', also implying that their written form is important in interpretative terms, pp.111-112.

[23] Voloshinov, *Marxism* cited in Ellis, 'Ideology and Subjectivity', p.192.

[24] Ellis, pp.192-193.

[25] I mean referential in the sense that Jakobson elaborates in 'The Functions of Language' (better known as 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics'), in Roman Jakobson, *On Language*, edited by Monique Mouvelle-Bush and Linda R. Waugh (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). The referential function pertains to the relations between the utterance and its object or referent.

[26] Williams, *Marxism and Literature,* p.35.

[27] Whilst it is not strictly accurate to classify Voloshinov or Bakhtin as theorists of intertextuality, there are occasions (such as this) when the use of the term is both convenient and appropriate.

[28] Bakhtin, 'The Problem of Speech Genres' in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p.69. The text was originally composed in 1952-1953.

[29] It is also part of the currency of criticism that Bakhtin scholars meet out to one another. See for example, Craig Brandist's review of Ken Hirschkop's, *Mikail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy* in *Radical Philosophy*, 104 (2000), pp.50-51. 'One other problem is the tendency to view Bakhtin as a rather more consistent thinker than he actually was' (p.51).

[30] The 'secret key' is covered well by Graham Pechey in 'On the Borders of Bakhtin: Dialogisation, Decolonisation' in *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*. Pechey offers Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, and Tzvetan Todorov as particular instances of this 'genre' of Bakhtin studies, the first two seeing 'Bakhtin's known affiliation to the Russian Orthodox Church as the secret of all his writing'; the latter seeing it in his 'philosophical anthropology' (p.40). In the same volume, David Shepherd, in 'Bakhtin and the Reader' ironically fears himself in danger of 'the tired gesture by which the Soviet theorist is burdened with the credit of having, single-handedly, or with a little help from his friends, always already anticipated the most significant theoretical trends of recent decades.' (p.91). 'Terrorise' is Lecercle's term for this phenomenon (*Interpretation as Pragmatics*, p.110). A case in point in Bakhtin

criticism is Jill Felicity Durey's review article 'The State of Play and Interplay in Intertextuality' in *Style* , 25, 4, (1991), pp.616-635. Despite the openness suggested by the title Durey wants to get back to the 'real' Bakhtin who is 'really' a literary critic, whose main task is 'evaluating literature' (p.631).

[31] On the struggle over where Bakhtin 'comes from' discursively speaking and the implications of this for the meanings of his concepts, see Hirschkop's excellent introductory essay to *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*, pp.1-38, especially p.4. Here he considers the ways in which Bakhtin's writings have been claimed and read as part of a neo-Kantian epistemological debate by the likes of Holquist and Clark and Todorov; as language philosophy by I. R. Titunik in the appendix essay to *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*; or, as sociology and sociolinguistics by Allon White. The first of these seems to be currently in the ascendant. Hirschkop's recent book *Mikail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) is also a contribution to a neo-Kantian reading, as is Craig Brandist's 'Neo-Kantianism in Cultural Theory: Bakhtin, Derrida and Foucault' in *Radical Philosophy*, 102, (2000), pp.6-16.

[32] Hirschkop, 'Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', p3.

[33] Williams, *Marxism and Literature* , p.21.

[34] 'Discourse in the Novel', *The Dialogic Imagination* edited by Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981). The text was originally composed in 1934-1935.

[35] See Bakhtin and P. N. Medvedev, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1978), pp.119-128.

[36] *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory,* p.4. 'The Architechtronics of the Deed' is discussed on pp.7-8.

[37] The third and preferred type of reading that Barthes proposes in 'Myth Today': 'the reader lives the myth as a story at once true and unreal', *Mythologies* (1957/1970), (London: Vintage, 1993), p.128.

[38] Tony Crowley, 'Bakhtin and the History of the Language', *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*, pp.68-90, p.70.

[39] See also 'Discourse in the Novel', pp. 382-3 where Bakhtin discusses the force of 'literary language' understood as a set of dominant languages and also p.297 where Bakhtin, identifying the poetic with

the literary describes the poet's practice as the attempt to assume a 'compete single-personed hegemony over language'. I will return to the meanings of the 'poetic' in Bakhtin below.

[40] Hirschkop, 'Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', p.5.

[41] *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). See in particular the chapter 'Discourse in Dostoevsky'. The book was first published in 1929 but was republished after significant extension and revisions in 1963.

[42] Bakhtin's relations with Saussure are discussed more explicitly later on in this section.

[43] 'The boundaries of each concrete utterance as a unit of speech communication are determined by *a change of speaking subjects*, that is a change of speakers.' ('The Problem of Speech Genres', pp. 71-2).

[44] See for example, 'Discourse in the Novel' pp.304-8.

[45] See for example, Holquist in his introduction to *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* who invokes what he calls 'normative restraints that control even our most intimate speech' as a caution 'to those who wish to invoke Bakhtin in the service of a boundless libertarianism' (p.xvii). Hirschkop, in *Mikail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy*', argues that too many critics have focused on dialogue in Bakhtin at the expense of genre, 'fascinated by the dazzle of dialogue, they ignore the other great emphasis of Bakhtin's work - an insistent and ceaseless interest in the 'generic' as the textual form in which the dialogical is embodied' (p.10). Hirschkop has two types of critic in mind here, which he dubs Russian-religious and American-liberal. The positions and protagonists are outlined on pp.5-10.

[46] See the characterisation of 'intimate genres and styles' in 'The Problem of Speech Genres', p.97.

[47] In this text, Bakhtin instances a very wide variety of genres, including 'writing (in all its various forms)', military commands, business documents (p.60), the genres of commentary (p.62) and 'table conversation' (p.82).

[48] There is a strong and suggestive parallel here with 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel', where Bakhtin discusses how spatio-temporal representations are always evaluative and in this sense constitutive. See in particular pp.245-250 of *The Dialogic Imagination*. This has particular relevance for the pragmatic conception of the canonical speech situation which will be discussed in chapter three.

[49] 'The words of a language belong to nobody, but still we hear those words only in particular individual utterances' (p.80, my emphasis).

[50] Bakhtin is clearly right in arguing that two concepts, the system of language and the speaker, cannot explain meaning or language use. However he has the tendency to polarise langue and parole here and elsewhere in terms which constitute parole as individual and not social. The sociality of the 'individual act' that is parole is explicitly addressed by Barthes in *Elements of Semiology* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1973), p.15.

[51] This is one example where Bakhtin's 'original philosophical position' as regards value can be seen to 'rumble along underneath', as Hirschkop puts it ('Introduction: Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', p.9).

[52] Further, as Hirschkop points out, 'the unrepeatable individual context of the utterance' is sometimes formulated in the rather limited terms of what pragmatics knows as the canonical speech situation: two speaker hearers who are co-temporal, co-spatial and co-present ('Introduction: Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', p.15), an issue to which I will return in chapter three.

[53] *Mikail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy*, p.11.

[54] *Mikail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy*, p.11.

[55] Although the poetic seems to have a stronger relationship to poetry than the novelistic does to the novel (in all its guises). See for example 'Discourse in the Novel', p.298, where he discusses the ways in which rhythm 'destroys in embryo those social worlds of speech and of persons that are potentially embedded in the word'.

[56] See 'Discourse in the Novel' pp.338-339 and pp.341-342.

[57] '... in extra-artistic prose (everyday, rhetorical, scholarly) dialogization usually stands apart, crystallises into a special kind of act of it's own and runs its course in ordinary dialogue or in other, compositionally marked forms for mixing and polemicising with the discourse of another - then in *artistic* prose, and especially in the novel, this dialogization penetrates from within the very way the word conceives its object and its means for expressing itself' (p.284). The distinction between transmission and representation strongly echoes Voloshinov's between linear and pictorial.

[58] 'Whilst in the many forms available for transmitting another's speech outside the novel there is no defining concern for the images of a language' (p.338, my emphasis). Likewise: 'The speaking person

and his discourse are not in everyday speech, subjects for artistic representation, but rather they are topics in the engaged transmission of practical information' (p.339).

[59] Bakhtin does acknowledge that there are some types of non-artistic utterance which do represent the other's utterance, but he argues that the element of representation is subordinate to another aim or purpose, see p.340.

[60] See for example pp.299-300.

[61] For example, 'the word with a sideward glance', *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, pp.204-205, but also Bakhtin's tendency to render the novelistic as agent, figuratively at least. See for example p.327 of 'Discourse in the Novel' where he talks about the 'tasks' of the novel.

[62] 'Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', p.23. See, as one example of many, Bakhtin's discussion of the chronotope of the road and the 'sociohistorical heterogeneity' which it reveals and represents in 'Forms of Time ... ', p.245.

[63] See 'The Problem of Speech Genres', p.63.

[64] 'The Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse' is in *The Dialogic Imagination* .

[65] This is made particularly clear in 'From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse'. Novelistic discourse is at once 'full of the echoes' of its 'prehistory' (p.50) as well as, articulating the struggles of the 'contemporary' heteroglossia.

[66] This focus on particular patterns of textual relations is everywhere in Bakhtin but it is particularly strongly elaborated in his discussion of the English comic novel in 'Discourse in the Novel'. For although Bakhtin insists on the variety of languages that it incorporates (p.301), this assertion has to be understood firstly as the possibility and actuality of a historical configurations of text-context relations (i.e. it is not simply the trans-historical reality of explicit dialogism), and second, in terms of how he distinguishes primary 'source[s] language use', most obviously 'common language' ('the average norm of spoken and written language for a given social group', p.301), which is the most frequently incorporated.

[67] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Riedlinger (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966), pp.20-21 and p.195.

[68] Tony Crowley, 'Bakhtin and the History of the Language', *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*, pp.83-4.

[69] Graham Pechey, 'On the Borders of Bakhtin', p.53. Pechey's critique of Bakhtin's Dickens furnishes particular evidence. For Pechey, Bakhtin's reading ignores the complex forms of bourgeois discourse which structure Dickens's novels, and mistakenly constructs Dickens as 'little more' than Fielding or Smollett 'in nineteenth century guise' (p.53).

[70] Julia Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel' (1966), *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, edited by Leon Roudiez (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), p.89. In the same text she identifies Bakhtin as 'one of the first to replace the static hewing out of texts with a model where literary structure does not simply *exist* but is generated in relations to *another* structure' (p.65).

[71] In a 1985 interview with Margaret Waller, Kristeva recalls how she was invited by Barthes to give a paper about her work on Bakhtin in the middle 1960s. This is instanced as part of a response to how she came to formulate intertextuality. ('Intertextuality and Literary Interpretation', *Julia Kristeva: Interviews*, edited by Ross Guberman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p.189.

[72] 'The Ruins of a Poetics' in *Russian Formalism: A Collection of Articles and Texts in Translation*, edited by Stephen Bann and John E. Bowlt (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1973). *Le Texte du Roman* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970).

[73] There is clearly something of both of these in her readings; thus whilst she correctly identifies the psychoanalytic potential in Bakhtin's formulation of I and the other (this is discussed below), a certain wilfulness or wishfulness sometimes intervenes. For example, writing of Bakhtin's use of 'voice', she insists, 'as for the voice, this is not the *phoné* which comes down to us from Greek texts and is identical with the speaker: it is a disembodied *phoné* which has lost its truth and is anxious about the locale of its emission: the place of the speaking subject' ('The Ruins of a Poetics', p.110). This seems to refuse a problematic ambiguity inherent in Bakhtin's concept. It is certainly true that the voice does not (as it so often does) coalesce utterance and speaker, but how far this voice 'has lost its truth' and so on is rather more difficult to say.

[74] In 'Bakhtin and Cultural Theory', Hirschkop considers Bakhtin's ambivalence to narrative, citing his argument in *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics* that 'narrative forms are fundamentally unsuited to the depiction of "the thinking human consciousness"' (p.25). It is not that Bakhtin does not consider

narrative: 'Forms of Time ...' is the classic instance. But although here he produces a developmental account of the novelistic chronotope and its relation to narrative, this is not discussed in terms of the relations between particular utterances within the narrative. In arguing that Kristeva manifests a strong interest in genre in these texts (where genre is conceived as a narrative configuration of the utterance relations within the text as a whole), I take issue with certain commentators, for example David Duff, who argue that the shift from Bakhtin to Kristeva (and other post-structuralists) is accompanied by a loss of interest in genre (cited in Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, p.57). I would argue that it is hard to evidence this absence of interest in genre in Kristeva's writing. For example, note the explicit value she places on Bakhtin and Medvedev's concept of literary genre as 'a way of apprehending the world'. ('The Ruins of a Poetics, ' p.118) and, the general emphasis she gives here to Bakhtin's concerns with the text in history and genre as the inscription of this.

[75] 'The Bounded Text' in *Desire in Language*, p.36. 'The Bounded Text' is an agglomeration of three separate sections of *Le Texte Du Roman*: 'Introduction', 'Le Texte Clos' and 'Du Symbol au Signe'. This in turn is a translation of a previous abridgement published in *Séméiotiké: Recherches pour une Sémanalyse* (Paris: Seuill, 1969). When I am discussing the sections of the text which have been translated into English I will cite from this edition.

[76] Kristeva, 'Intertextuality and Literary Interpretation' (interview), pp.189-190.

[77] See for example the discussion of courtly love poetry below.

[78] 'La "forme" romanesque est un jeu, un changement constant, un mouvement vers un but jamais atteint, une aspiration vers une finalité deçue, ou, disons en terms actuels, une TRANSFORMATION.' (*Le Texte du Roman*, p.17) [The novelistic form is a game, a constant change, a movement towards a never attained goal, an aspiration towards a deceptive finality, or in contemporary terms, a TRANSFORMATION. (my translation)].

[79] See for example pp.18-19 where she posits transformation against narrative formulated as 'myth'.

[80] The General Text has the same place in Kristeva's schema as Bakhtin's heteroglossia (a term she does not use). This in turn draws attention to Kristeva's use of the term 'translinguistics' in *Texte* which draws explicitly on both Bakhtin and on Barthes's formulation in *Elements of Semiology* - see *Texte*, p12-13 . In both *Texte* and *Elements of Semiology*, translinguistics asserts the dominance of

linguistics within semiology, as the category or practice through which any semiotic practice is explored and encountered, 'a language...which is not quite that of the linguist: it is a second order language with its unities no longer monemes or phonemes, but larger fragments of discourse ...' (*Elements of Semiology*, p.11). This in turn marks another difference between Bakhtin and Kristeva. The concept of the General Text opens up the possibility of exploring the semantic relations between linguistic and other signifying practices. Kristeva's interest in textual relations is discussed explicitly on pp.36-37 of 'The Bounded Text'.

[81] See 'The Bounded Text', pp.48-49 and 52-53.

[82] Bakhtin and Medvedev, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, pp.17-25. Both citations are from p.18.

[83] The 'raznochinets', a member of the emergent middle class, who is figured as the hero of one of Turgenev's novels, is one of Bakhtin and Medvedev's examples; not a socio-economic category but an ideological one, a formulation which is, crucially, socially determined: the raznochinets is a construction of the liberal nobility to which Turgenev belonged (p.21).

[84] To formulate the utterance as ideologeme is 'not an interpretative step coming after analysis in order to explain "as ideological" what was first "perceived" as "linguistic" ('The Bounded Text', p.37.)

[85] 'Extra-artistic ideologemes are studied from the standpoint of their artistic functions in the novel', *The Formal Method*, p.23. See also how Fredric Jameson makes of the ideologeme *in The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981). Jameson makes extensive use of the concept in the book as a whole, but see in particular his analysis of some of the ideologemes at work in the novels of George Gissing, pp.185-93.

[86] On the development of print culture and the conflict between sacred and secular books see *Texte*, particularly pp.143-145; on the growth of a 'culture of exchange' and the figure of the author see p. 53 and pp.44-45 of 'The Bounded Text'.

[87] Although clearly it is possible for a writing practice to have a different relationship to the sign than the novel. Her very critique of the novel's articulation of the sign marks the possibility of another practice, elsewhere aligned with modernist writing.

[88] 'The Adolescent Novel' in *Abjection, Melancholia and Love: The Work of Julia Kristeva*, edited by John Fletcher and Andrew Benjamin (London: Routledge, 1998).

[89] Although she does make brief reference to Saintré's position as child ('The Bounded Text', p.51), this is mentioned in relation to his various non-disjunctive functions as 'child and warrior, page and hero', straight and gay. But this complexity of figuration is discussed exclusively in terms of the non-disjunctive logic of the sign which makes it all possible: 'His homosexuality is merely the narrativisation of the non-disjunctive function peculiar to the semiotic process of which he is a part' (p.51).

[90] 'The Adolescent Novel', p.11.

[91] And within this framework Saintré's 'defeat' (as it is figured in *Texte* and discussed above) becomes a triumph: 'The importance of this novel - and its novel character - rest in the triumph of the adolescent over his incest object, through the imaginary assimilation of the latter's discourse' (p.13).

[92] 'The Ruins of a Poetics', p.109.

[93] 'The System and the Speaking Subject' in *The Kristeva Reader*, edited by Toril Moi (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p.26.

[94] 'The Ethics of Linguistics', *Desire in Language*, p.24.

[95] This definition is proposed in a 1991 interview entitled 'Avant-Garde Practice', *Julia Kristeva: Interviews*, p.212.

[96] 'The Ethics of Linguistics' p.25.

[97] 'The Ethics of Linguistics' p.29.

[98] *La Révolution du Language Poétique*, (Paris: Seuill, 1974), translated by Margaret Waller as *Revolution in Poetic Language* (New York: Columbia, 1984). Toril Moi points out in her introduction to the extract of *Revolution* published in *The Kristeva Reader* that the English language edition includes only the first third of the text i.e. the general linguistic and psycholinguistic theory, and not the detailed analyses of Mallarmé and Lautréamont (p.89).

[99] Kristeva, 'Avant-Garde Practice', p.212.

[100] 'The inclusion of the semiotic in the symbolic' is Kristeva's own formulation ('Avant-Garde Practice', p.212). 'Pre-representative production' is Philip E. Lewis's formulation in an excellent

review of *Révolution*, 'Revolutionary Semiotics', *Diacritics*, IV, 3 (Fall 1974), pp.28-32, p.30. He also notes the 'unsettling distinction' (p.31) that Kristeva constructs through her use of the semiotic and the symbolic: a conceptual recasting which refuses their commonsense exchangeability.

[101] 'Freud opens up the problematics of work as a particular semiotic system, distinct from that of exchange: this work takes place within communicative speech, but differs from it in essence, it does not think, calculate or judge, it is content to transform'. Kristeva, *Séméiotiké*, cited in Lewis, p.30.

[102] Lewis, 'Revolutionary Semiotics', p.31.

[103] Leslie Hill, 'Julia Kristeva Theorising the Avant-Garde?' in *Abjection, Melancholia and Love*, edited by Fletcher and Benjamin, p.145.

[104] On Kristeva's emphasis on the reading within writing, see 'Word-Dialogue-Novel', in particular p.65.

[105] Bakhtin asserts the active role of the reader most strongly in 'The Problem of Speech Genres', in particular p. 94. His account of 're-accentuation' which denotes a distinctive literary-critical reading practice (and not it would seem reading in general) in the closing pages of 'Discourse in the Novel' differentiates productive, legitimate and necessary re-accentuations from 'distort[ions] and even 'crude violations of the author's will' (p.420). Though it should be noted that it is the text's initial historical position within a specific heteroglossia and the changes on the text that changes in the heteroglossia effect which are Bakhtin's main concern here.

[106] See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: a Theory of Poetry* (Oxford, OUP, 1973), and *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford, OUP, 1975). See also Sandra M Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) and Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own* (London: Virago, 1979). Both the latter texts seek to construct or reconstruct traditions of women's writing and view the tradition as constitutive of subsequent writing possibilities. While both books stress the conflicts of identity and practice that women writers struggle with, this is articulated more strongly in Gilbert and Gubar, who draw explicitly on Bloom and in particular *The Anxiety of Influence* (see in particular pp.46-53).

[107] Jacques Derrida, 'Signature Event Context' in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, edited by Peggy Kamuf, (New York: Columbia Press, 1991) pp. 102-3.

[108] 'Complexly historical' in the terms formulated by Louis Althusser, most explicitly in 'The Object of Capital', chapters 4 and 5 (pp.91-144) of Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, 2nd edition (London: New Left Books, 1977).

[110] For example in *A Map of Misreading* (p.19): A poet, I argue ... is not so much a man speaking to men as a man rebelling against being spoken to by a dead man (the precursor) outrageously more alive than himself.'

[111] On the relationality of social difference, see for example Allen's discussion of Henry Louis Gates's account of 'Signifyin(g)': 'a metaphor for formal revision or intertextuality within the Afro-American tradition' in *Intertextuality*, pp.166-173.

[112] John Fiske, 'The Moments of Television: Neither the Text nor the Audience' in *Remote Control: Television, Audiences and Cultural Power*, edited by Ellen Seiter, Hans Borchers, Gabriele Kreutzner and Eva Maria Warth (London: Routledge, 1989), p.63. Fiske does concede that the producerly text that 'delegates the production of meaning to the viewer-producer' is not avant-garde (unlike the writerly text), but he diminishes this moderation when he asserts in the same sentence that it offers 'provocative spaces' to the viewer. (My emphasis.)

[113] Julia Kristeva, *Séméiotiké*, cited in Lewis, 'Revolutionary Semiotics', p.29.

[114] Although Landow emphasises that hypertext as a technology has the power to 'reconfigure our culture's basic assumptions about textuality, authorship, creative property, education and a range of other issues' (Introduction in *Hyper/Text/Theory* edited by George P. Landow (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1994), pp.1-48, p.32), these 'assumptions' seem to square rather too neatly with many of the assumptions and topoi of contemporary literary theory. This point is made explicit in the introduction to Paul Delany and Landow editors, *Hypermedia and Literary Studies* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1995), pp3-50, p.4. On the one hand , Landow and Delany argue that hypertext is challenging in the terms mentioned. On the other, 'it [hypertext] can also provide a revelation, by making visible and explicit mental processes that have always been part of the total experience of

reading. For the text as the reader *imagined* it ... never had to be linear, bounded or fixed.' See also p.6: 'These deep theoretical implications of hypertext converge with some major points of contemporary literary and semiological theory, particularly with Derrida's emphasis on decentring, with Barthes's conception of the readerly versus the writerly text, with post-modernism's rejection of sequential narratives and unitary perspectives, and with the issue of intertextuality.'

[115] Roman Jakobson, 'The Dominant' in *Readings in Russian Poetics* edited by Ladislaw Matejka and Krystyna Pomorska (London: 1971).

[116] Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975)

[117] Simon Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.97.

[118] Julia Kristeva, 'The Ruins of a Poetics' in *Russian Formalism: A Collection of Articles and Texts in Translation*, edited by Stephen Bann and John E. Bowlt (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1973), p107. Further, 'the aim of his (Bakhtin's) analysis is no longer to elucidate how a work is constructed, but to locate it within a typology of meaning systems in history' (p.107, my emphasis). The relationship between her concept of intertextuality and history is also strongly marked in a 1989 interview. Asked what she thinks of Barthes's proposal that the discourse of love lies outside history, she replies: 'I have already tried to answer this aporia posed by Barthes with the idea of intertextuality'. See 'Cultural Strangeness and the Subject in Crisis' in *Julia Kristeva: Interviews*, edited by Ross Mitchell Guberman (New York: Columbia, 1996), p.52.

[119] See for example, Dale M. Bauer, *Feminist Dialogics: a Theory of Failed Community* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

[120] Pechey, 'On the Borders of Bakhtin', in *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*, p.52.

[121] John Frow, *Marxism and Literary History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p.127-129.

[122] The 'author-function' refers of course to Foucault and 'What is an Author?" in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, edited by Donald F. Bouchard and translated by Sherry Simon (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977). Foucault's account of discourse, including his account of how the author orders discourse, is discussed in part two of the thesis (chapters four to six).

[123] Emma, directed by Douglas McGrath (UK: 1996).

Chapter Two: Inferential Theories

> ... I do not think that meaning is essentially connected with convention. What it is essentially connected with is some way of fixing what sentences mean: convention is indeed one of these ways but it is not the only one (Paul Grice).[1]

> The notion of inference is important because language itself is ambiguous, vague and fragmentary (Gert Rickhart, Wolfgang Schnotz and Hans Strohner).[2]

1. Pragmatics: a sketch

Some definitions of the object of pragmatics are disarmingly simple: 'language use', 'the pairing of a sentence and a context'; and, most simply of all, 'utterances'.[3] While the first and third suggest immediate parallels with Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, these are of limited value unless the specificity of pragmatic enquiry is established.[4] Further, the account of interpretation which I will be focusing on here, Relevance theory, itself has to be situated; in particular, its a-typicality and idiosyncracy have to be delineated if its strengths and weaknesses are to be understood. This requires not only a sketch of pragmatics (this section) but also some discussion of the ways in which human inferential abilities have been theorised (section two), given the central role they are allocated in Relevance.

The definitions of the pragmatic object offered above share two features. First they mark a preoccupation with definitions of spoken discourse. For although there is an increasing body of work in pragmatics on written and print discourse, speech retains a special place. Second, these definitions are clearly relational: not language in the abstract (as system: langue or competence); more than sentences: 'utterance' is a contrastive to 'sentence' conceived as a set of exclusively linguistic properties (although an utterance can of course be less than a sentence defined minimally as noun phrase plus verb phrase). The utterance is a combination of linguistic and non-linguistic properties: it is spoken by someone, at a particular time and place, in a particular situation. The utterance 'it's hot' has certain invariable linguistic properties: it contains certain word classes (pronoun, verb, adjective), it has a declarative form and so on; and each instantiation of it will contain these. Yet 'it' may refer to the weather, a bowl of soup, the temperature in a room, or (in a slightly archaic idiom) a song or an item of clothing. If 'it' refers to the weather, the attitude of the speaker to the heat of the day may be one of enthusiasm, disappointment or irritation. The temperature of the bowl of soup may be a matter of pleasure or pain, it might be a warning (you may burn your tongue) or a polite imperative (it's ready to drink now but it won't stay hot for long) and so on. Central here is the idea that linguistic meaning is not the whole story, that the linguistically encoded meaning of an utterance is not, or at least, may not, determine its full meaning. Pragmatics as a field of enquiry is predicated on this, on the gaps, differences and discrepancies between sentence meaning and utterance

meaning. Its right to existence is staked on it and a number of questions follow. What are the best ways to describe these differences? Are they contingent features of communication or are they constitutive? How wide or narrow might the gaps be? And how might we explain them? If utterance meaning is not wholly encoded in the utterance, is it encoded elsewhere, for example in features of the situation? If so, how do hearers decode such meanings, which must clearly involve non-linguistic knowledge?[5] Are there then 'pragmatic' rules or principles which govern utterance interpretation? But, on the other hand, is non-linguistic meaning encoded at all? Are there other processes that might govern utterance interpretation? Are these specific to communication, or, are they are more general cognitive principles?[6] The gap between coded meaning and interpretation that pragmatics is predicated on will be familiar to those working within contemporary cultural and literary theory but what follows is not. In pragmatics, this founding assumption of discrepancy does not entail that interpretation as both process and 'result' is somehow less constrained, more 'open', and various, as it is so frequently presumed to be in cultural theory. As the questions above suggest, one of the key goals is to identify what other (non-linguistic) factors may determine meaning and the processes which make such determinations possible.

Given such questions, most definitions of the pragmatic object only begin in this simple way, and for good reason, for the answers are complex and in turn depend on a whole set of concepts and assumptions: about language users, the kinds of non-linguistic knowledge they have and deploy in communication, how such knowledges are internally structured and represented. Further, what lies or should lie within the domain of pragmatic enquiry is strongly contested. Lawrence Horn, in his essay on pragmatic theory for *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey* begins confidently enough:

> If the coming of age of an academic discipline is at least partly conditioned on the emergence of a broad, comprehensive, intellectually honest and pedagogically sound introductory textbook, pragmatics is in pretty good shape.[7]

The reference is to Stephen Levinson's *Pragmatics* (one of the established Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics Series); but a page later he acknowledges that 'the status of pragmatics as a field remains unsettled'.[8] Horn toys half seriously with the question of the field's legitimacy: the argument from authority that proposes semantics as its 'mother discipline' and the 'real-world' argument that pragmatics has applications (noting how ideas about human inferencing have been applied to artificial systems).[9] But what emerges most strongly is an insistence that pragmatics should not be defined as secondary to other kinds of linguistic enquiry. Two pairs of distinctions seem to be salient to most attempts to delimit pragmatics as a field and configure its relations with

other modes of linguistic enquiry. The first, illustrated here, relates to whether pragmatics is deemed to be central or peripheral to linguistics in general; the second to how broadly or narrowly pragmatics is defined. These are not two ways of saying the same thing. Pragmatics may be defined narrowly, for example in terms of a set of 'topics' - deixis, implicature, speech acts and so on - and yet still be (and is in these cases) considered central to understanding meaning as a whole.[10]

> Be careful with forcing bits and pieces you find in the pragmatic wastebasket into your favourite syntactico-semantic theory. It would perhaps be preferable to first bring some order into the content of the wastebasket.[11]

The rich metaphor of the wastebasket suggests something more than pragmatics as the remainder or residue. It does indeed suggest a lack of fit: what has to be excluded in order that a particular field can explain certain kinds of phenomena adequately and coherently. But it also suggests 'recycling': a two-way traffic which seems to acknowledge a concern about what has been excluded (why otherwise return to the wastebasket?), and the hope of constructing order within the disorder: that pragmatics is not just so much unclassifiable 'rubbish'. The accounts discussed in detail here all view pragmatics as central to the understanding of meaning, and in all cases there is a challenge to the explanatory scope of semantics - the strongest rival.

> Some would say that the semantics / pragmatics distinction is the competence / performance distinction applied to the level of meaning: semantic knowledge is part of linguistic knowledge while utterance interpretation is a performance which employs this knowledge together with a range of other competencies (for instance knowledge of logical principles / rules), general world-knowledge, and, say, special principles ... .[12]

A special principle might be pragmatic, classically Grice's Cooperative Principle, discussed below, or as in the case of Relevance, a general cognitive principle which also applies - though in specialised terms - to communication. Not surprisingly, 'strong' pragmatic accounts assign non-linguistic knowledge a fundamental role in the determination of meaning. This is particularly clear when the explanatory claims of formal or truth conditional semantics are being assessed. In formal semantics, context is acknowledged to the extent that it can determine the truth conditionality of an utterance (and is defined accordingly). 'I am Napoleon' is true if and only if the speaker is Napoleon and so on. But in order for a truth value to be assigned, the utterance requires a fully propositional representation. The example above ('it's hot') requires a referent for 'it', the disambiguation of 'hot' (e.g. does it have a literal or figurative sense?), and probably 'is' (If 'it' is referring to the weather, does 'is' refer to this minute, this morning, the day etc.?). It is only if an utterance is fully

'propositionalised' that a truth value can be assigned to it. Such procedures clearly involve non-linguistic as well as linguistic knowledge. The types of linguistic meaning that formal semantics concerns itself with are seemingly shot through with pragmatic meaning.

Some definitions of pragmatics are challengingly (even unnervingly) broad. In the *Handbook of Pragmatics Manual* , described by its editors as a 'state of the art report', pragmatics is defined as a 'perspective on language rather than a component of linguistic theory'.[13] This is a critical allusion to Geoffrey Leech's paralleling of grammar and pragmatics as complementary domains within linguistics.[14] But there is a second contrastive in view, what Jeff Verschueren refers to as topic-based pragmatics (speech acts, implicatures, deixis). Although this does describe the structure and chaptering of Levinson's *Pragmatics*, 'topics' seems a rather superficial characterisation of its scope. However, the *Manual* is useful to the extent that it draws together an extensive set of fields where language in use is studied: work on language acquisition, the structures and patterns of conversation, discourse and critical discourse analysis (of speech and writing), theories of text comprehension, as well as broader zones of enquiry which may take account of any of these, such as psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics.[15] All of these, in Verschueren's words, are pragmatic: examining 'language use and the relations between language form and language use'.

Speech act theory is a canonical example of a pragmatics concerned with the relations and frequent discrepancies between linguistic form and utterance meaning; a theory which powerfully demonstrates the frequent mismatch between linguistically-encoded utterance properties such as mood, aspect or tense on the one hand, and the particular and often very different meanings that utterances convey in situ.[16] A declarative may function with the semantic force of an interrogative, an interrogative with the force of an imperative and so on. Yet it appears that hearers usually have little or no difficulty in distinguishing the particular, intended force of the utterance from its conventional form when these are discrepant. Likewise, accounts of implicature focus on the relations and frequent gap between the conventional or coded meaning of an utterance and what is implicated by it. Tony asks Helen where Peter is and she replies: 'There's a silver Vespa outside number seventeen'. Tony understands from this that Peter may well be at Mark's house because he knows that Peter has a silver Vespa and that Mark lives at number seventeen. Indeed 'Peter may well be at Mark's house' is his interpretation of Helen's utterance. This is an implicature which is derived from a combination of Mary's utterance, certain kinds of non-linguistic knowledge, about where Mark lives and so on, and some kind of pragmatic or cognitive principle which orders interpretation. He does not say to Helen: 'You're not answering my question'

or 'But I asked where Peter was; I'm not interested in parking arrangements or mopeds'. He treats Helen's utterance as a reply to his question. I will consider particular principles in detail below but what is important here is that 'There's a silver Vespa outside number seventeen' does not linguistically encode 'Peter may well be at Mark's house'. What matters is exactly how Tony achieves this interpretation, given that what is 'said' is so different from what is 'meant' (to follow the Gricean distinction).

Returning then to definitions of the field. I have no interest here in entering here into a debate about whether or not, for example, sociolinguistics should be a part of pragmatics (or whether pragmatics should be / is a component of sociolinguistics). However it seems to me that a further distinction can be drawn within pragmatics (conceived in the broadest terms as language use) between accounts which make it their primary goal to explain interpretative processes, what might be termed a 'strong' pragmatics, and accounts which do not. It is, of course, the former that I am interested in. So sociolinguistics, as its name suggests, is predominantly concerned with describing and explaining correlations between social categories and relations, on the one hand, and language practice, on the other. For example, how is gender inscribed in language practice? how do certain kinds of institutional settings (the courtroom, the seminar room etc.) shape language use? Although there may be an interest in interpretation, in the main such work has drawn on and built on concepts of interpretative process (e.g. inference, the classification and interpretation of speech acts) developed elsewhere. Critical Discourse Analysis also maps such correlations but there is a stronger focus on how social and cultural authority and conflict are inscribed in language, and an explicit critique of social relations as they are and as they are assumed to be in much of the sociology that sociolinguistics draws on. Therefore while Critical Discourse Analysis is the only field within pragmatics that draws explicitly on intertextual theories (notably Bakhtin), it has little to offer a theory of interpretative processes. A further distinction is relevant here, pertaining to the object that the interpretative process is modelled on. The accounts of interpretation I will be exploring predominantly focus on utterances which comprise single sentences or sentence fragments spoken by a single speaker, and various multiples of this (most usually pairs). Text and discourse comprehension (as their names suggest) examine the interpretation of longer 'utterances', focusing in particular on how relations are established between them within a particular text.[17] Whilst the former have evident disadvantages for a project specifically concerned with the interpretation of print texts (an issue to which I will return in chapter three), I would argue that the minimal unit of language in use is a better starting point than 'text' or 'discourse' conceived in the terms above (I emphasise 'starting point'). This is, in part, a methodological preference:

favouring a procedure that works 'up' whilst always acknowledging that larger units of discourse may require a modification of the theory being developed.[18] Second, theories of discourse comprehension are strongly committed to the assumption that texts are for the most part coherent and conceive interpretation as being predominantly a coherence-building exercise. Such processes clearly do play a part but such a framework is not a plausible starting point for an account of intertextual interpretation given the centrality accorded to conflict and contradiction within the utterance. Third, while Grice and Sperber and Wilson's brief and usually constructed examples can simplify or neglect certain features which shape interpretation, the 'texts' that discourse comprehension concerns itself with are frequently comparably simple, and certainly in no way as complex as the kinds of texts I will be examining in chapters ~~four~~ Five + Six and ~~five~~. Therefore, whilst I will be making selective contrastive reference to discourse comprehension (specifically the recent work of Walter Kintsch), such theories are not my chosen focus of interest.[19]

Such distinctions significantly narrow the field of focus, but there are also substantive differences in the ways in which interpretative processes have been theorised: as some kind of decoding processes and as inferential processes. Further, both these processes and their relations have been theorised very differently and are clearly consequent upon the ways in which the key concepts of pragmatic enquiry are modelled: language, utterance, meaning, context and the speaking and interpreting subject. I will conclude this section by sampling a few of these definitions. The aim is not to be exhaustive but to suggest how such definitions inflect the characterisation of the interpretative process.

No theory of interpretative process can function without some implicit or explicit definition of language, without some characterisation of the 'matter' that is processed by interpretation. Banal in itself, but what follows is not. In pragmatics, language is conceived either as a code which pairs phonetic or graphological representations with semantic ones (most explicitly perhaps in Relevance), or as a set of conventions (as in Grice). The latter is the legacy of ordinary language philosophy where the conventional meaning of an expression is defined as what 'most people' think it means. Codes and conventions are not the same thing. To define language as a set of conventions makes no claim about its systematicity. Convention may exert a strong force on interpretation (or not), but this force is not the consequence of an underlying and orderly system (langue or competence). Crucial here is the role that language, as convention or code, is assigned in the interpretative process. How far does linguistic meaning determine utterance meaning? Are utterances relatively semantically complete entities which require minimal extension and 'completion' by the hearer, or, are they radically and constitutively underdetermined (in semantic terms): 'evidence' for an interpretation but

only that? Intimately linked to this issue is the question of what types of meaning are being talked about? The gap between sentence and utterance clearly proposes at least two kinds of meaning: sentence meaning and utterance meaning. But does an utterance, realised in a particular context, have only one meaning? If the utterance is defined as radically underdetermined by its linguistic meaning (as it is in Relevance), it would seem to follow that the range of its possible interpretations must necessarily expand. Are all these possible interpretations of interest? The answer is both yes and no. Yes, in the sense that the range of interpretative possibilities is the starting point for theories which propose the utterance as strongly underdetermined. No, in the sense that such theories are centrally interested in why a particular interpretation is 'selected' by the hearer from the range. Therefore the account of the interpretative process must specify not only how a hearer produces an interpretation from an underdetermined linguistic form in a particular situation, but how a particular interpretation or set of interpretations is selected from a range of possibilities.

Central here is another distinction, between utterance meaning and speaker meaning, between what the utterance might mean in a particular context and what the speaker intends it to mean. For Grice, as for Sperber and Wilson, the pragmatic goal is to explain how the hearer interprets speaker meaning. And whilst not all explanatory pragmatic theory accords such a important role to speaker meaning (and therefore to intention), it is important to recognise that these three types of meaning (sentence, utterance and speaker meaning) are at work in most such accounts.[20] Intention is clearly an issue to which I will return here and in chapter three as there are fundamental disparities between intertextual theories of meaning, which are fundamentally anti-intentionalist, and pragmatic ones. But, as I aim to demonstrate, the place of intention within such theories should not be a reason for a summary rejection of pragmatics before its explanatory potential is evaluated. At the very least, pragmatics demonstrates the need for a concept of preferred meaning, whether or not this is aligned with the speaker.

Definitions of context and the language user, implicit or explicit, are likewise central to any account of interpretation. If context makes an utterance an utterance (and not a sentence), then its definition has clear implications for any account of the interpretative process, which must explain how contexts are deployed in that process. And, if the interest is in interpretative processes, context must be defined, as Peter Mey puts it, 'from the user's point of view'.[21] Context is the knowledge which speaker-hearers make use of in communication. It therefore needs to be distinguished from the situation of utterance which may of course supply contextual information to speaker-hearers. Definitions of context vary in two important ways: firstly, according to the role which context is assigned in the interpretative process; secondly and

relatedly, according to the way in which the speaking subject is theorised. Context may be defined minimally as knowledge of the referents of the situation of utterance which makes possible the procedures of reference assignment and disambiguation noted above. The classic formalisation of the relation between utterance and context is the canonical speech situation which assumes two speaker-hearers who are co-temporal, co-spatial and co-present, a model and assumption in much pragmatics. If utterances are defined as relatively semantically complete, then contextual information can be expected to play a relatively small role in interpretation. If, however, the gap between linguistic meaning and utterance meaning is constitutive, then context and the processes by which it is accessed and deployed become central to the account of the interpretative process. Central here is the issue (congruent to the one of 'selecting' one interpretation from many) of how and why certain knowledge is 'selected' as context in an interpretative process. Definitions of context are also shaped by the definition of the user. Mey, for example, in defining context as 'the total social setting', takes account not only of the local coordinates of the utterance situation but the complex social identities of the participants and their relations to society as a whole, thus proposing that these play a role in the interpretative process.[22] Such a formulation resists the idea of context as 'a widening of the sentential perspective', proposing a definition of context which does not begin with the utterance-sentence contrast but with language as a sociological phenomenon.[23] A significant - though clearly highly speculative - focus in many cognitive accounts of communication is on how knowledge is mentally represented, its minimal units or constituents and how these might be ordered, for example in the form of scripts or schemas, concepts borrowed from cognitive psychology. These can be understood as a bodies of assumptions and expectations about a particular event or object which may be mobilised and utilised as a unit in cognition and interpretation, for example as a default when there is no more specific information (the onset of specific information may of course cancel the interpretative value of the some aspect of the script).[24] A key question relates to the fixity or fluidity of scripts. Kintsch notes that schema theories have shifted from being rather rigid formulas to being more like recipes which are generated in contextually-sensitive terms.[25] 'The supermarket script' may contain certain assumptions about the kinds of things that can be bought in a supermarket, the categories which order their display (we expect to find bacon alongside other meat products and not with washing powder, for example), and these will shape many of the talk-exchanges that we have. We can ask confidently 'where are the eggs?' but not where are the motor-cycle helmets or the puppies. But this script will be generated in relation to more specialised knowledges and expectations: I know that my local supermarket orders a significant number of displays around geo-cultural criteria: 'A Taste of' Italy, Greece, The Middle East,

The East and so on (but no England, France, Scotland, India) - initially confusing if you were looking for olive oil. I expect that if I go into my local supermarket just after Christmas, stocks will be depleted. Schemas, of course, assume certain general cognitive abilities, particularly as regards classification: they presume a certain kind of subject; but they also presume the relative stability of many types of situations and encounters (in terms comparable with strong accounts of genre and/or register). I know, for example, that all supermarkets move certain kinds of products around.

In more general terms, pragmatics always presumes or explicitly theorises a particular kind of speaking and interpreting subject. The speaker-hearer may be an always-already social subject (as in Mey's case, for example) or may be conceived as primarily (in the senses of first and fundamentally) an individual (Grice, Sperber and Wilson). The role of authority relations as they pertain narrowly to the participants within a communicative situation, or broadly to their position within social relations as a whole may be anything from strongly to very weakly marked. This clearly suggests something about the directions that accounts of the interpretative process might take.

Pragmatics is then predicated on a gap between sentence and utterance, between utterance and its interpretation. A strong pragmatics is committed to explaining how, given such gaps, successful communication is possible, indeed probable. It is in inferential accounts of interpretation that this gap has been most systematically explored.

2. Inference

Although inferential accounts of communication owe a significant debt to ordinary language philosophy, it is not easy to stay true to the conventions of this tradition by starting with some 'ordinary' senses of 'inference' or 'inferencing' (and its possible relations with 'inferring'). Imaginable contexts of use seem very far from 'ordinary', inscribing highly specialised situations, knowledges and procedures: the courtroom ('This is the only inference that can be drawn and it demonstrates without a doubt that you had a very strong motive for...; 'I infer from your statement that...' etc.), possibly the police interview-room, and their many and varied representations within the genre of detective fiction. Such uses are in some sense suggestive, first drawing attention to how utterances are treated, in significant part, as <u>evidence</u> of particular meanings; and second, because inferential procedures are fundamentally concerned with knowledge <u>relations</u>. The parallel with detective fiction ends here however; a genre centrally preoccupied with knowledge it most certainly is, but utterances cannot in this tradition be treated as 'clues', as will become clear. In the most simple terms, inferential accounts of communication treat utterances as evidence for meaning (rather

than the encoded instantiation of it), evidence which is put together with other evidence (context) as 'premises' in order to derive conclusions, better known as interpretations. In this section my aim is first to sketch the types of answers that inferential accounts of communication offer to the questions posed by the gap between linguistic meaning and interpretation, and the further questions such answers prompt. And second, to offer a brief outline of Grice's concepts of conversational implicature and meaning. These are generally treated as the starting point for accounts of inferential communication, and is an important context for Relevance. And therefore whilst others, most notably Oswald Ducrot, have independently developed congruent accounts of inference, it is on Grice's work that I will focus.[26] It is important however to note at the outset that the study of inferential processes is not confined to pragmatics but plays an important role in cognitive psychology more generally, where Piaget's work on child development and particularly reasoning ability is a central reference.[27] This has particular pertinence for Relevance which, despite its pragmatic focus, defines itself as a general cognitive theory which is 'psychologically plausible'.

Inference and communication

All accounts of human inferential abilities and processes intersect with three related sets of questions: about the relations between human inferential capabilities and processes and formal systems i.e. logics; the relations between human inference and human rationality; and, with questions about knowledge acquisition (though these are not confined to 'learning' in the formal or child-development senses). When a human communicative or cognitive process is treated as inferential, there is always a relation being proposed between such a process and the procedures of formal logic, immediately suggesting a comparison and contrast between interpretation and argumentation. Formal logics 'seek[] to make as precise as possible the conditions under which an argument ... is acceptable', whether the conclusion of an argument follows from its premises: whether it is sound or unsound, logically valid or invalid.[28] So can inferential communication be characterised as a formal deductive procedure? The general pragmatic answer is no. In a communicative situation, interpretative conclusions cannot be guaranteed by the premises that the utterance and context supply, in Sperber and Wilson's words, 'communication may fail'.[29] Human inference is therefore a non-demonstrative procedure. In pragmatics, logical systems provide the basis for a contrastive model. Grice offers a classic formulation of this in 'Logic and Conversation'. Ordinary language and logical languages do not work in the same way (even though there is an underlying order in conversational exchanges) and Grice's coinage 'implicature' captures the contrastive relation between logical and natural

languages: it has a relation to the logical term 'imply', but implicatures are distinguished from 'inferences' (the result of a deductive procedure).[30] In a very different vein, Kintsch argues that only one of the procedures utilised by interpreters in discourse comprehension can strictly be labelled 'inference': when new information is generated from existing information. He calls this logical inference, distinguishing it from other procedures where existing information is retrieved from memory to plug gaps or build bridges within the text as it is interpreted.[31] The comparison with logic also raises the question of whether there are specialised rules or procedures which order and constrain human inferencing. Formal logics have specialised rules and sequenced procedures whose aim is 'to control the activity of deduction [so] as to ensure that the conclusion reached is validly reached'.[32] In the case of Sperber and Wilson, as we shall see, the mind has access to specific logical rules. In other theories it is proposed that human inference proceeds by model or/and rule. Kinstch, for example, argues that human inference is probably a mixture of modelling and rules: perceptual representations are produced by mental modelling which orders inferencing, whilst wholly symbolic abstract inference proceeds by rule. He also suggests that inference in language could involve both.[33] The relation between logical and natural languages is clearly linked to the broader issue of human rationality. Do natural languages and communicative processes inscribe the natural reasoning processes of a rational subject? The issue here is not whether humans are rational creatures, clearly they are; but rather the extent to which they are. How much of communicative practice can it explain? And what, if any, is the role of non-rational or irrational processes in interpretation? Inferential models of communication also raise issues about knowledge relations: most obviously the production of new knowledge from existing knowledge, but also about how existing knowledge is used in inference. Scripts or schemas for example, can be understood as contexts which, when mobilised, can supply bridging assumptions for inferential procedures, and which may also constrain the inferential process.[34] As noted above, such accounts must explain the procedures through which inference proceeds. It is important to recognise here that inferential models of communication are not exclusively interested in 'canonical' logical relations: those of consequence (e.g. if P then Q), conjunction (e.g. P and Q), disjunction (e.g. P or Q), negation (e.g. P or not P, P and not not P) and contradiction (e.g. P and not-P). Sperber and Wilson, for example, are also strongly interested in the relative force of assumptions and the inferential procedures by which they can be weakened or strengthened.[35]

The most important difference between a strict en-de-coding model and an inferential one is that whilst the former putatively guarantees the message which is communicated, the latter does not. A very large number of inferences can follow from

an utterance-premise. Returning to the silver Vespa example. Helen's utterance provides evidence for a whole range of conclusions: that she is alive, that she is a speaker of English, that she knows what a Vespa is, that there is a silver Vespa parked outside number seventeen, that she has (presumably recently) seen a silver Vespa parked outside this house and so on. The fundamental question which inferential accounts must address is how a particular interpretation-conclusion is reached; an account which must also explain why particular contextual knowledge is used alongside the utterance in the interpretative process. Inferential accounts of communication propose that a 'principle' of some kind governs interpretation: a principle which constrains inferencing (I place 'principle' in inverted commas at this juncture to suggest loose use because the way principle is understood varies in important ways). It may be a general cognitive principle which applies in a specialised way to utterance interpretation, as is the case with Relevance. It may be a specifically pragmatic principle (though deemed to have parallels with practices other than communication), as in the case of Grice.

3. Grice: saying and meaning

Grice's influence is widely recognised within pragmatics, and not only by those who work within the 'Gricean' tradition. Levinson, who situates his own work in that tradition:

> The notion of conversational implicature is one of the single most important ideas in pragmatics.[36]

Robyn Carston, a key contributor to Relevance theory writes:

> Grice's idea that there are prevailing standards of rational communicative behaviour, embodied in his Cooperative Principle and conversational maxims, has effected a revolution in the way linguistically communicated meaning is thought about and analysed.[37]

Carston's acknowledgement is the more interesting because Relevance theory makes a radical break with Gricean accounts of inference. Grice's own starting point in his writings about meaning is the limited explanatory force of convention.

> ... I do not think that meaning is essentially connected with convention. What it is essentially connected with is some way of fixing what sentences mean: convention is indeed one of these ways but it is not the only one.[38]

It is this dissatisfaction that provides the framework for his work on both implicatures and non-natural meaning, though it is the former that will be the focus here. Indeed Grice's writings on language are an attempt to radically reduce the zone of meaning which is governed by convention. As Levinson points out:

> Here we see that the truth-conditional content of an utterance (what, in Grice's special sense, is *said*) may be only a small part of its total meaning.[39]

In Grice's writings there are two broad ways in which the force of conventional meaning is queried. First a clear distinction is made between the conventional meaning of an utterance and what might be implied or, more strictly, 'implicated' by it; and second, a more fundamental distinction is asserted between the 'standard meaning', or 'the meaning in general of a "sign"' and 'what a particular speaker or writer means by a sign on a particular occasion (which may well diverge from the standard meaning of the sign).'[40] What is necessary for A to mean something by x (where A is a speaker and x is an utterance)? Crucial here is the 'by'; the question is not 'what does x mean?' Grice's answer in 'Meaning':

> Perhaps we may sum up what is necessary for A to mean something by x as follows. A must intend to induce by x a belief in an audience, and he must also intend his utterance to be recognised as so intended. But these intentions are not independent; the recognition is intended by A to play its part in inducing the belief, and if it does not do so something will have gone wrong with the fulfilment of A's intentions.[41]

Both question and answer suggest the limits of convention and the idea that the utterance provides evidence for producing a belief in the audience which is recognised as intended by A. The definition above is of what Grice calls 'non-natural meaning' or 'meaning$_{NN}$'. At the beginning of 'Meaning', he sets out to distinguish two senses of meaning: natural and non-natural meaning. In an utterance like 'those clouds mean rain', a logical relation of entailment is proposed between the clouds and the rain. It is not possible to say 'those clouds mean rain but it won't rain'.[42] Natural meaning is contrasted with non-natural meaning: 'those three rings on the bell (of the bus) mean that the bus is full'. In this case, the three rings on the bus do not entail that it is full; it is possible to go on and say that 'but it isn't full'. The non-natural sense of 'means' is easy to understand but harder to formulate. Grice characterises it thus:

> The ... sentence can be restated in a form in which the verb 'mean' is followed by a phrase in quotation marks, that is 'Those three rings on the bell mean "the bus is full."' [43]

We might also say that the use of 'means' in such cases is metalinguistic or, in this case meta-significatory and that it establishes a relation of semantic equivalence between the two items: 'the bus is full' is a translation of 'those three rings on the bell'.[44] In general terms, $meaning_{NN}$ is the kind of meaning that we find in linguistic communication: not 'x means y' but rather 'what is meant by x' (when x is an utterance). It is interesting that Grice's distinction between natural and non-natural sidesteps another form of 'x means y' where x is a signifier and y is a signified and no logical relation of entailment is proposed: a code-message pairing. Indeed in the same text, Grice insists that words are not signs.[45]

What is meant by x opens up a way of thinking of x as evidence for a meaning. It is in a later sequence of texts that an explicit concept of implicated meaning is proposed: the William James lectures, in particular 'Logic and Conversation' and 'Further Notes on Logic and Conversation'.[46] Grice's starting point in the former is the 'commonplace of philosophical logic' that there are divergences of meaning between formal logical operators such as 'not', 'if', 'then' etc. and their natural language 'analogues or counterparts'.[47] Nevertheless, he argues, there is an underlying order in talk-exchanges which belies what a strictly logical analysis would classify as disorderly. Crucially, what is said may differ radically from what is meant or implied.[48] For Grice, non-sequiturs, irrelevancies, redundancies, ellipses and so on are, in the main, only apparently disorderly. In fact they are evidence of a principle, the Cooperative Principle, which underlies ordinary conversation:

> Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.[49]

This overarching principle governs a specific set of maxims which connect the speaker with what is said: maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. Quantity relates to the amount and extent of information provided:

> 1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
> 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality relates to the truthfulness of the information presented:

> Try to make your contribution one that is true.

Grice terms this a 'supermaxim', and identifies two more specific ones:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for you which you lack adequate evidence.

There is only one maxim of Relation:

Be relevant.

The maxims of manner relate not to 'what is said' but to *how* what is said is to be said'. The supermaxim is:

Be perspicuous.

But more specifically:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.[50]

Immediately noticeable is the imperative form: this is how speakers should behave in talk-exchanges. Yet what is also obvious is that speakers do not always or indeed often behave in this way, and Grice knows this very well. The maxims are not an elaboration of the Principle: it is the Principle which governs conversation. What a speaker says may be literally untrue (metaphor for example), or unnecessarily prolix, or irrelevant, but the hearer assumes that the Cooperative Principle is still operating and produces an interpretation in accordance with it. Apparent irrelevance may be the consequence of a clash between two maxims.[51] Returning once more to the silver Vespa example: Helen's seemingly non-sequitur response arises from a clash between the maxims of quality and relation. She is not certain where Peter is and she would violate the maxim of quality if she said, for example, that Peter was at Mark's. The apparent irrelevance of her utterance can be resolved if Tony assumes that the principle is operating and realises that Helen is upholding the maxim of quality. An utterance may also flout the maxims. 'Flouting' is distinguished from 'violating' a maxim when the speaker may mislead the hearer; or from opting out of the Cooperative Principle altogether. 'Flouting' means that the Cooperative Principle is in operation (despite appearances to the contrary).[52] In one of Grice's examples, an academic is asked to write a reference for a student applying for an academic job. Here is his letter and Grice's commentary:

> 'Dear Sir, Mr X's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours etc.' (Gloss: A cannot be opting out, since if

> he wished to be uncooperative, why write at all? He cannot, through ignorance be unable to say more, since the man is his pupil, moreover he knows that more information than this is wanted. He must, therefore, be wishing to impart information that he is reluctant to write down. This supposition is tenable only if he thinks Mr X is no good at philosophy. This, then, is what he is implicating).[53]

Grice's definition of conversational implicatures is partially structured by a contrast with the logical definition of deduction. Whilst a logical inference is not cancellable, a conversational implicature can be. In the example above, the writer of the reference could continue after 'regular' and write that Mr X is also a brilliant philosopher. It would be an odd and unlikely sentence but Grice's point is that the implicature is cancellable. Levinson takes the contrast further and sees this as evidence that Gricean implicature is more akin to inductive reasoning.[54] Further an utterance can be false and its implicature true and vice versa (many metaphors are in a literal sense false, but implicate something that is or might be true). The implicature is carried, not by what is said but 'only by the saying of what is said, or by putting it that way'.[55] This differentiates implicatures from deductive inference where the aim is to guarantee the validity of conclusions from premises. Conversational implicatures are also, with one kind of exception, 'non-detachable': 'it will not be possible to find another way of saying the same thing which simply lacks the implicature in question'.[56] The exception is, of course, the maxim of manner, the only maxim where <u>how</u> the utterance is said carries the implicature.

Grice does not explain in detail how such implicatures are produced by hearers, but he does argue that they are <u>calculable</u> on the basis of the following information: (1) the conventional meaning of the words used plus the identity of any referents involved; (2) the Cooperative Principle and the maxims; (3) the context 'linguistic or otherwise' of the utterance; (4) other items of background knowledge; (5) the fact that speaker and hearer both have access to the relevant information contained in (1) to (4) and know or assume this to be the case.[57]

> Peter: Where's Tony?
> Helen: There's a silver Vespa parked outside number seventeen

Helen's reply has a conventional meaning but this does not answer Peter's question; it also flouts the maxim of relation but, as discussed above, Peter assumes that Helen is being Cooperative. He also has certain contextual and background knowledge: for example that Tony is the owner of a silver Vespa and that Mark lives at number seventeen. He also knows that Helen knows these things and that she knows or assumes that he knows them. They have <u>mutual</u> knowledge, meaning that their

knowledge includes the knowledge that they share it. This knowledge can be represented as an 'argument': Tony owns a silver Vespa, Mark lives at number seventeen, Tony may have parked outside number seventeen, Tony may be visiting Mark. This suggests a further feature of conversational implicatures. Given that the calculation of an implicature presupposes 'an initial knowledge of the conventional force of the expression ... a conversational implicatum is not included in the original specification of the expression's conventional force.'[58]

Grice's account of implicature distinguishes two other forms of implicated meaning besides conversational implicatures. First, conventional implicatures, where the conventional meaning of a word, or what Levinson describes more specifically as its logical and semantic properties, carries an implicature.[59] One of Grice's examples:

> If I say (smugly), *He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave*, I have certainly committed myself, by virtue of the meaning of my words, to its being the case that his being brave is a consequence of (follows from) his being an Englishman.[60]

Here, it is the conventional meaning of 'therefore' that determines what is implicated. Second, Grice identifies generalised conversational implicatures. Here the implicature is not carried by the conventional meaning of an expression but 'would normally', 'in the absence of special circumstances' carry a particular implicature. One of Grice's very few examples is 'X is meeting a woman this evening' which 'normally' implicates that the woman X is meeting is not X's mother, wife or sister.[61] The distinction between generalised and 'particularised' conversational implicatures (usually more simply termed 'conversational implicatures') foregrounds the situation-bound character of the latter: they are not merely non-conventional but a function of the particularised circumstances of an utterance situation.

Whilst in Grice's work utterance situations and utterance meaning are highly variable, the practices of speakers are not: communication is centrally governed by human rationality. This is clearly evidenced in 'Logic and Conversation': the observation of the Cooperative Principle is reasonable and rational.[62] It is also strongly marked in 'Meaning Revisited' where Grice characterises human rationality as being centrally about evaluation: 'a rational creature is a creature which evaluates'.[63] And it is obvious that Grice's account of talk exchanges and the principle which governs them is predicated on just such an ability to evaluate. The production of implicatures assumes the hearer's ability to recognise that the conventional meaning of the expression is in some sense an inadequate interpretation. Human rationality is likewise a focus in 'Meaning', where the relations between rationality and intentionality are configured.

> ... [F]or x to have meaning$_{NN}$, the intended effect must be something which in some sense is within the control of the audience, or that in some sense of 'reason' the recognition of the intention behind x is for the audience a reason and not merely a cause.[64]

The audience's recognition of the intention behind x does not 'cause' a belief, it is a reason to have it.

Grice's work also needs to be understood within the setting of ordinary language philosophy, where 'ordinary language' is both contrasted with logical languages and an object of philosophy: 'ordinary discourse' is 'worthy' of the philosopher's attention.[65] One of philosophy's tasks is 'to analyse, describe, or characterise (in as general terms as possible) the ordinary use or uses of certain expressions or classes of expression.'[66] If philosophy is interested in the concept of causality, for example, then the situations where we do (or do not) speak of cause should form part of the investigation.[67] Grice begins a number of his discussions with what he treats as intuitive ordinary sense distinctions, most notably perhaps his discussion of 'say' and 'imply', 'suggest' and 'mean' in 'Logic and Conversation'.[68] The numerous problems of ordinary language philosophy have been much discussed and are not relevant here.[69] What is pertinent is how this framework shapes his thinking about communication. As Carston points out, in the William James lectures Grice was addressing the practices of ordinary language philosophy and not simply considering talk exchanges.[70] But what is most important is the model of language that his ordinary language approach generates. The maxims of manner ('be perspicuous' and, specifically, 'avoid obscurity of expression', 'avoid ambiguity', 'be brief' and 'be orderly') model a natural language on a logical one and make the clear exchange of information the priority. Grice is himself aware that the maxims generally prioritise information exchange and acknowledges this as a problem. This said, the maxims would require significant re-modelling if the other conversational goals that Grice identifies, 'influencing or directing the actions of others', are to be taken account of.[71] Influencing or, to be more precise, persuading others may precisely rest on the maintenance of ambiguity. Further, in certain situations - take for example the case of two strongly opposed political parties who enter into a tactical agreement over a particular issue - participants in the 'talk-exchange' may agree on a lexical formula which each interprets differently precisely because of its ambiguous potential. Ordinary language is also distinguished from Grice's sense of 'technical language'.[72] This imagines a world of language practice which is predominantly non-specialised, in terms which fit with his concept of convention (what most people in most circumstances think an expression means). As will be considered below and, in more

detail in chapter three, it is not a world which sits easily with strong concepts of genre or register.

Grice's work has been subject to many criticisms and revisions. Levinson is one of a number of commentators who has both identified a vagueness in Grice's account of the interpretative process and sought to work within a Gricean framework.[73] A number of questions have been raised as to the character and number of the maxims and their relations: why this number? why not more? why not fewer? Is one / are some more important than others?[74] Are maxim clashes one of the central features of talk-exchanges and therefore central to interpretation? Or are such clashes instead evidence of a weakness in the principle itself.[75] Other maxims have been proposed: most famously perhaps, the maxim of politeness which has obvious implications for the maxims which are centrally governed by truth, quantity and relation.[76] Leech has proposed a potentially endless proliferation of maxims, including a modesty maxim: 'maximise dispraise of self'.[77] Others, most notably Sperber and Wilson, have taken a minimalist approach, arguing that one principle governs communication, though their concept of relevance is very far from Grice's maxim of Relation. The seeming universality of the maxims has likewise been criticised. Are the maxims universal or, are some of them culturally specific? Do certain situations prioritise one or another maxim over the others?

All this is, needless to say, evidence of Grice's impact: the general pragmatic acknowledgement that some meanings at least are neither coded nor conventional, but 'implied', that interpretation is in part at least an inferential process, and that it is governed by a specific principle or principles. Most usually this principle is identified as pragmatic: specific to communication. Though not always. Walter Kintsch, for example, not only argues that discourse comprehension is a substantially inferential process but classifies it as a particular type of cognitive process.[78] Nor does Kintsch propose a specific principle which interpreters have knowledge of and apply. Rather, what governs comprehension is the type of process that comprehension is: a process of constraint satisfaction.

> ... [C]omprehension occurs when and if the elements that enter into the process achieve a stable state in which the majority of elements are meaningfully related to one another and other elements that do not fit the pattern of the majority are suppressed.[79]

Comprehension is achieved through the building of a mental model which incorporates textual and situational features as propositions or 'predicate-argument' schemas (though this does not commit them to being fully logical forms).[80] The process of construction is achieved 'by making connections between things that were previously disparate'.[81]

These connections or 'nodes' may be strengthened or weakened. The noun 'bear' in an utterance such as 'the bear killed the tourist' might initially associatively mobilise 'honey' in a form such as 'bears like honey'. This connection may be strengthened and deployed in an inferential procedure if, for example, the text continues:

> The bear killed the tourist. He was eating a honey sandwich.

'Bears like honey' enables the interpreter to produce a causal connection which is not semantically or logically marked: the inference to be drawn is that the bear killed the tourist because he was eating a honey sandwich. However if there is nothing else to support such a connection (The bear killed the tourist because he was dressed up as a bear), the connection will 'wither away'.[82] One of the key differences between Kintsch's approach and Grice's is that for Kintsch there is no principle over and above the goal of the comprehension process which has to be known and applied by the interpreter. This rejection of a specific principle which is distinct from interpretation (in the sense that it is applied) is formally shared with Relevance. And its consequences are far reaching for theorising interpretation.

4. Relevance and ostensive-inferential communication

Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, first published in 1986, has excited considerable interest, much of it highly critical.[83] The book is characterised by a rhetorical boldness - both in the force of its own claims and in its outright dismissal of many of the sacred cows of pragmatics.[84] A number of reviewers responded antipathetically to what were perceived as deliberate provocations, unfounded claims and the summary rejection of established concepts.[85] At least one reviewer however, seems to have taken Sperber and Wilson at their word. Entitled 'A New Theory of Communication', Alaistair Fowler proposes that Relevance 'offers nothing less than the makings of a radically new theory of communication.' [86]

More than fifteen years later, Relevance theory remains highly controversial: the answer to communication, cognition and 'everything', or the emperor's new clothes. Relevance now boasts its own entry in the annual *Language and Linguistic Behaviour Abstracts*, a number of published bibliographies - both indexes of output which suggest 'use' rather than 'mention' - and an essay in the Cambridge Survey of Linguistics.[87] It is also interesting that much of this work has not been produced by the authors, although they remain committed to their account, but by others who seek to develop, test and extend the theory.[88]

There are a number of reasons why the exposition of Relevance theory below is the central component of this chapter. First, Relevance is a strong inferential account of communication, because Sperber and Wilson argue that inference is the primary process in all interpretation. Relevance therefore provides a single strong model of inferential interpretation through and against which intertextual accounts can be read. Second, Relevance theory aims to be fully explanatory of all types of verbal communication. Particularly important is the commitment to fully explicating the processes of utterance production and interpretation - a rigorous alternative to the vagueness which surrounds intertextual accounts of reading. Third, Relevance, is, in important ways, a critique of pragmatics as it is currently constituted and proposes very different types of explanation for pragmatic phenomena. In proposing a pragmatic framework for intertextual interpretation, both the critique and the alternative demand consideration. Fourth and finally, Relevance considers a wide range of utterance types - direct, free indirect and indirect speech, ironic and metaphoric utterances in their bid to demonstrate the explanatory power of their theory. But, unlike Grice for example, they do not assume a zero degree of style which requires no explanation. Nor are the literal and the figurative conceived as separate categories, but rather as two poles of a continuous axis. Such assumptions and the arguments which follow them are, at least in theory, more compatible with the models of production that intertextual theories propose.

Although *Relevance* seeks to answer a number of conventional pragmatic questions (about the interpretation of new and shared knowledge, metaphor, speech acts and so on), Sperber and Wilson's framework is cognitive science. Most specifically they are interested in developing an account of inferencing as a central thought process which will also throw light on the nature and functioning of mental representations.[89] Relevance, the principle which governs this process, is itself shaped by contemporary cognitive ideas of the human which owe much to a set of contrasts and comparisons with computing science: 'human beings are efficient information processing devices'.[90] Such a framework is far from unique in contemporary 'explanatory' pragmatics.[91] And the importance of the 'cognitive turn' is recognised by Jef Verschueren in his introduction to the *Handbook of Pragmatics Manual*, when he criticises pragmaticians who ignore cognitive questions.[92] What is distinctive about Sperber and Wilson's approach is their insistence on defining linguistic communication as a specialised subset of cognition in general and its grounding in evolutionary psychology. The definition of human beings as efficient information-processing devices continues: 'this is their most obvious asset as a species'.[93] However, whilst *Relevance* explicitly engages with a number of issues in cognitive science, the text's relation to evolutionary psychology is implicit and unelaborated. This context emerges

in Sperber's subsequent work on irrational beliefs, human metarepresentational ability and the 'epidemiology' of representations.[94]

Relevance: defining communication

In the simplest terms, *Relevance* proposes that one process (a specific type of inferencing) and one principle (relevance) can explain our understanding of anything from the smell of gas to a complex metaphor. While communication differs from many other forms of cognition in that it is intentional and self-demonstrative, and while linguistic communication utilises a code, inferencing, governed by relevance, is central and primary to all forms of cognition and communication.[95] Code-based approaches provide an immediate and illuminating contrast. First, linguistic communication is conceived exclusively as an en-de-coding process: it does not utilise a code, it is en-de-coding. Second, whilst much semiotic research treats language as a model for other signifying systems, Sperber and Wilson classify linguistic communication within a taxonomy of cognition which foregrounds its distinctiveness. Unlike other phenomena which may be cognised, it is intentional and ostensive; unlike other forms of deliberate and ostensive 'stimuli' which are communicative, it deploys a code. And as the last point suggests, not all forms of communication are coded (*Relevance*, pp.50-4). In the account below I will examine Sperber and Wilson's account of verbal communication as it is developed within a general theory of cognition. I will also consider a number of the criticisms that have been made of Relevance from within pragmatics. These concern the account of inference itself, the Principles of Relevance, the 'hyper-rationality' of the cognising and communicating subject that Relevance proposes, and the centrality of intentionality and speaker meaning within their model.

The questions which a plausible theory of communication should address and the distinctiveness of Sperber and Wilson's approach emerge in a set of criticisms of code-based and extant inferential accounts. Communication, they argue, involves more than the decoding of a linguistic signal (*Relevance*, p.6). There is a gap between the semantic representations yielded by decoding and the thoughts communicated by them which en-de-coding cannot explain (p.9). The code-model, defined strictly as a set of signal-message pairings, is supposed to guarantee an identity of representations between speaker and hearer, but semiotics has never demonstrated this (p.8). It is not entirely clear what they include under the heading of semiotics, although Saussure, Hjelmslev, Barthes and Lévi-Strauss are all mentioned (*Relevance*, pp.7-8). But from their account it would seem that structuralism or 'high structuralism' is the focus of the attack. Their 'strict' definition of a code as 'a system of signal-message pairs' would

seem to square with the structuralist confidence of the fifties and early sixties rather than with work which, whilst grounded in and committed to exploring cultural practices as signifying systems, would contest such a definition (p.8).

Given these problems, as Sperber and Wilson formulate them, inferencing would seem to offer an alternative explanation of communication; but they are highly critical of extant accounts. Existing theories tend to treat inferencing as subservient to decoding, a contingent process which can plug the gaps between sentence and utterance meaning. This leaves the assumption intact that at least some utterance meanings are fully encoded. Further, inference is often treated like a decoding operation: rules and premises are shared and applied (pp.12-15). But, argue Sperber and Wilson, how do speaker-hearers know which rules to apply in a particular communicative situation (p.15)? Even if the number and type of rules were limited (as they later go on to propose), how can it be assumed that they share the same premises (knowledge)? It cannot. First, they claim, because speaker-hearer knowledge is fundamentally 'idiosyncratic', certain, limited knowledge is shared but 'beyond this common framework, individuals tend to be highly idiosyncratic' (p.16). Second, speaker-hearers would not just have to share premises but also know which ones they shared, taking us back to Grice's account of how implicatures are 'calculated' and the mutual knowledge hypothesis. And Sperber and Wilson find this implausible as either putative empirical description or as an idealised goal (pp.17-21).

Decoding and inference are, they conclude, very different types of process.

> An *inferential* process starts from a set of premises and results in a set of conclusions which follow logically from, or are at least warranted by the premises. A *decoding* process starts from a signal and results in the recovery of a message which is associated with the signal by an underlying code. In general, conclusions are not associated to their premises by a code, and signals do not warrant the messages they convey (pp.12-13).

Once the distinctiveness of inference is recognised, a different set of issues opens up:

> ... logical systems ... allow infinitely many different conclusions to be derived from the same premises. How then is the hearer to infer just those conclusions the speaker intended by the speaker (p.15)?

This is exactly the question that Relevance addresses. But Sperber and Wilson must also explain how this can happen without the guarantees of mutual knowledge.

As mentioned above, Sperber and Wilson characterise communication as a specialised sub-set of cognition which they characterise as 'information-processing' (p.38). Information 'is [either] manifest to' or 'capable of being/becoming manifest to' an individual, where 'manifest' means capable of being mentally represented:

'perceptible' or 'inferable' (p.39). Important here is the subjunctive mood: perceptible rather than perceived. 'An individual's total cognitive environment is the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer' (my emphasis): not just the knowledge the subject has but that which they are capable of knowing (p.39). The total cognitive environment is clearly dynamic: constantly subject to modification by the information that is processed. Such modifications are termed 'cognitive effects'.[96] Individuals can share cognitive environments (though not of course total cognitive environments, given their idiosyncracy argument): in a given situation a set of assumptions may be manifest to two or more people (p.41). It can likewise be manifest to these people that they share a cognitive environment: it is one of the assumptions that are mutually manifest to them. Two people are sitting in a room, the phone rings; the phone ringing is mutually manifest to both (p.41-42). Mutually manifest assumptions are, therefore, those assumptions which are manifest in a mutual cognitive environment. This is a clearly distinguishable counter to mutual knowledge or assumptions as they prefer.[97] First because it is, in an important sense, broader: incorporating what the individual is capable of knowing not just a fixed stock of assumptions. Second, they argue, it is weaker 'in just the right way' in the sense that is more plausible (p.43). Mutual manifestness cannot guarantee that speaker and hearer will make 'symmetrical choices' about code and context, this is what mutual knowledge is designed to do (p.43).

> On this approach, failures in communication are to be expected: what is mysterious and requires explanation is not failure but success (p.45).

This is consistent with their 'loose' characterisation of communication itself which does not guarantee an identity of representations between communicator and audience, but rather similarity or resemblance - a refrain in their writing and one I will return to. For Sperber and Wilson, communication centrally involves the focusing of the audience's attention and any act of communication automatically does this. This insight is, of course, drawn from the Grice of 'Meaning' and 'Meaning Revisited'.

> the very act of communicating creates expectations which it then exploits [and] the task of linguistic semantics could be considerably simplified by treating a large array of problems in terms of implicatures. (*Relevance*, p.37)

'[T]he very act of communicating creates expectations which it then exploits'. This insight, which they describe as one of Grice's 'original hunches' (p.38) is their starting point for an explanatory model which, they argue, needs to be 'psychologically realistic' (p.38). Sperber and Wilson reframe this within their own lexicon. Whilst 'any state of affairs provides direct evidence for a variety of assumptions', these are

not necessarily communicated (p.23). To communicate is to make mutually manifest an intention to communicate a set of assumptions and focus the attention of the audience on the communicator's intentions (p.153).[98] Communication is therefore ostensive and, fundamentally inferential.

Verbal communication is a special type of ostensive-inferential communication. Non-verbal communication can of course be ostensive, but it is weak and vague and 'one can never be sure which of a variety of assumptions made manifest by the communicator she herself actually had in mind' (pp.174-175). By contrast, in linguistic communication,

> [t]he linguistic description is determined by the grammar and does not vary with the interests or point of view of the hearers. Second, this linguistic description yields a range of semantic representations, one for every sense of the sentence uttered. Each semantic representation is a schema, which must be completed and integrated into an assumption about the speaker's informative intention ... Moreover each schematic sense is generally quite different from all the others, and can be completed in quite different ways ... the various possible interpretations of an utterance tend to be radically different from one another so that when one is chosen the others are automatically eliminated (p.175).

It is worth citing this definition in full as their account of interpretation is so strongly dependent upon it. Utterances yield a fixed set of semantic representations: coded because they are determined by a grammar. These correspond to all the possible senses of the sentence uttered and are usually divergent and incompatible. Sperber and Wilson stop short of claiming that the various semantic representations are disjunctive. The use of 'generally' and 'tend to' incline against such a strong reading. But the selection of one interpretation means that the others are 'automatically eliminated'.

Crucial here is the difference between identifying language as a code and defining communication only in terms of encoding and decoding. For Sperber and Wilson verbal communication is finally distinct from other forms of ostensive-inferential communication because it involves both en-de-coding and inferential processes. However,

> [t]he coded communication process is not autonomous: it is subservient to the inferential process. The inferential process is autonomous: it functions in essentially the same way whether or not combined with coded communication (p.176).

Inferencing is not an adjunct to decoding, stepping in to fill in the gaps that coding cannot supply, nor is it a contingent process, not always strictly necessary - as it is in Grice. It is a central, necessary and above all general process independent of decoding and therefore language use: inferencing processes are not specifically pragmatic. The

semantic representations produced by decoding are only useful to the extent that they function as a source of hypotheses and evidence from which interpretations are inferred (p.176).

The inferential process

Sperber and Wilson's account of inference aims to specify both the rules and system which govern it in terms which they see as psychologically plausible. And as with many accounts of human inferencing, the contrast with formal logical systems is fundamental to the development of their formulation. But whilst strongly asserting that inference is 'less a logical process that a form of suitably constrained guesswork', they are highly critical of the vagueness of many pragmatic formulations of the relation, conceiving these as 'purely negative characterisation[s]' (pp.69-70). For example Levinson's proposal, that pragmatic inferences are 'quite unlike logical inferences' and K. Bach and R. Harnish's characterisation of the process as "'not deductive but what might be called inference to a plausible explanation'", fail to specify the character of the process itself and seem, to Sperber and Wilson, to rest on the assumption that if it works it is not worth thinking about (pp.69-70).[99] This 'negative characterisation' of inference formally echoes the explicit and implicit formulas for characterising intertextual interpretation as <u>not</u> (any simple form of) decoding which likewise leaves the question of what it is unanswered.

As noted above, Sperber and Wilson accord with the general pragmatic wisdom that human inference is non-demonstrative. Conclusions cannot be guaranteed by premises: 'even under the best of circumstances ... communication may fail' (p.65). It is further specified as a global and non-specialised thought process: 'global' because 'any conceptually represented information' can be used by the addressee as a premise within an inference process (p.65); 'non-specialised' because it is an 'ordinary, central thought process, as opposed to a specialised input process' (p.65).[100] The inference process is also spontaneous, nearly instantaneous and unconscious. Although there are forms of inference which are consciously and explicitly reasoned (two examples they give are the interpretations of literary and religious scholars), these are not, they argue, the appropriate model from which to extrapolate the processes of 'most ordinary thinking, and in particular ordinary verbal communication' (p.75).

It is this conjunction of characteristics of the human inference process - non-demonstrative; global (but constrained by its speed but also, in the case of utterance interpretation, the helpfulness of the source); spontaneous; and, unconscious - which differentiates human inference from formal logical processes. This characterisation, they argue, makes success or lack of success and efficiency or inefficiency the criteria

by which the process should be judged rather than logical validity or invalidity (p.69). And indeed, efficiency becomes central to their account of inference and the principle which governs it. This emphasis on efficiency is a feature of many cognitive accounts of text comprehension, where the speed at which certain types of inference are generated and the assumption that working memory is very limited lead many to conclude that 'issues of efficiency and economy [are] highly important.'[101]

However Sperber and Wilson break with pragmatic common-sense when they assert:

> the only logical rules spontaneously available to the human mind are *deductive* rules (p.69).

This would also seem to contradict their own argument. How can a process be at once logical and non-logical? Sperber and Wilson differentiate the overall process of spontaneous non-demonstrative inference, which is not logical, from the use of deductive rules within the process. A non-demonstrative inference cannot 'consist' of a deduction, but there is no reason suppose that it cannot 'contain a deduction as one of its sub-parts' (p.69). Given their cognitive framework, this claim has consequences for the conceptual representation system they model. If an inference contains a deduction and deductive rules are the only logical rules available to the human mind, then conceptual representations must have logical properties, which in turn suggests that the deductive system applies to conceptual as opposed to perceptual representations, thus strengthening their claim that the inference process in a generalised thought process (pp.72-75). Sperber and Wilson defend their claims about deductive inference through an appeal to efficiency which is framed in cognitive and evolutionary terms. A deductive system 'effects an important economy of storage' (p.85). Given a set of deductive rules, the logical implications of a set of assumptions can be deduced as opposed to being separately stored. Deductive rules are a useful tool to any organism which seeks to improve its knowledge of the world, enabling it to both work out the consequences of new assumptions and 'guaranteeing the accuracy of any conclusions deduced from initially accurate premises' (p.85). Finally, deductive rules are a tool for exposing inaccuracies and inconsistencies in its conceptual representations, enabling more accurate, and therefore more useful representations (p.85).

They then delimit the type of deductive rules that are used. The only rules 'which can appear in the logical entry of a given concept are elimination rules' (p.86).[102] Again this conclusion seems to be derived from a definition of the human which is both modelled on but clearly differentiated from formal logical systems. Whilst logical

systems aim at completeness - the derivation of all the logical implications of an assumption or set of assumptions - human 'systems' do not. Here, the time factor and the interest in cognitive gains make such completeness unnecessary and the generation of trivial implications unlikely. This difference opens the way to another strong claim, namely that

> the human deductive device only has access to elimination rules (p.97).

In certain types of formal logic, introduction and elimination rules are used to handle deductions which include propositions with more than one constituent such as the conjunction 'P and Q' or the disjunction 'either P or Q'. Introduction rules enable the derivation of conclusions which contain '... and ...' or 'either ... or'. Elimination rules enable the use of premises which contain '... and ...' or 'either ... or' within a deduction process.[103] Thus, for example the rule of And-introduction enables the conjunctive conclusion 'P and Q' to be derived from the separate premises 'P' and 'Q'. The rule of And-elimination enables the single constituent 'P' to be derived from the conjunctive 'P and Q'. Sperber and Wilson argue that the conclusions which are derived from introduction rules are 'in some intuitive sense trivial' (p.97).

Sperber and Wilson's account of inference has prompted considerable controversy:

> Chapter two outlines a speculative psychology of inference likely to leave psychologists, logicians, semanticists and computer scientists in some degree of apoplexy.[104]

Levinson is highly critical of the argument that only deductive rules are available to the human mind for spontaneous inferencing and argues that there is no evidence to suppose that introduction rules play no part in the process.[105] In a different vein, Eve E. Sweetener criticises Sperber and Wilson for not making the controversial character of their model explicit: the strong resemblance between thought structures and linguistic structures that they propose cannot be assumed.[106] This raises an interesting issue about the relations between communication and cognition in their model. On the one hand Sperber and Wilson are committed to defining communication as a specialised sub-set of cognition; on the other they use utterance comprehension as a model for a general thought process. The nearly instantaneous nature of the process and the fact that utterances come from a helpful source constrain the inferencing process before they even discuss the types of rule that govern it. Is the recourse to communication as a model for a general cognitive process functioning here as an attempt to delimit the inference process?

Relevance and verbal communication

An account of the inferential process, however explicit, does not explain why individuals process information or how they come to derive one set of conclusions rather than another. Sperber and Wilson propose that the processing of all phenomena and stimuli - non-ostensive, ostensive and ostensive-coded - is guided by the same 'principle': relevance. The first Principle of Relevance:

> Human cognition tends to be geared towards the maximisation of relevance (p.260).[107]

So what is relevance? 'Relevance' as it is defined by Sperber and Wilson carries some of the senses that ordinary language uses carry:

> we believe that there is an important psychological property - a property of mental processes - which the ordinary notion of relevance roughly approximates.[108]

Intuitions about relevance and degrees of relevance suggest the beginnings of a psychologically plausible account of cognition and communication; but the development of their definition owes rather little to this. Relevance is predicated on a characterisation of the human subject as an efficient information-processing device. But efficiency is not exclusively a matter of economy or processing costs. These have to be offset by the benefits or cognitive gains defined in terms of a general goal: human cognition in general is geared towards improving the individual's knowledge of the world (pp.46-48). Loosely speaking, something (a phenomenon, stimulus, ostensive-stimulus etc.) is relevant in so far as the cognitive gains make it worth processing in terms of 'costs':

> Efficiency with respect to relative goals is a matter of striking a balance between degree of achievement and expenditure' (p.47).

Old information is not worth processing from the standpoint of efficiently improving one's representation of the world and completely new information requires too much expenditure for too little achievement. But new information that can be processed in relation to old information can produce 'new' information in a cost-effective way.[109] The use of old information - existing assumptions - to process new information - which is connected to it - gives rise to modifications of context. These modifications are defined by Sperber and Wilson as 'contextual effects' (p.108) which they use to measure achievement-efficiency relations and define relevance. Improving one's

knowledge of the world is not only conceived as extending one's stock of information or assumptions: a process of accumulation. What makes their picture more interesting is that the processing of new information may strengthen old assumptions or weaken or even lead to their abandonment (p.109), immediately marking their focus on the possible relations between assumptions; most importantly assumptions can confirm or contradict one another. They conclude:

> [w]e want to argue that having contextual effects is a necessary condition for Relevance, and that other things being equal, the greater the contextual effects, the greater the relevance (p.119).[110]

The Second or Communicative Principle is grounded in the first:

> Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance (Postface to second edition, p.260).

This presumption has two components:

> *Presumption of optimal relevance (revised)*
> (a) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.
> (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences (Postface, p.270)

What is immediately obvious is the break with the Gricean model. The utterance has to be relevant 'enough' to be worth the effort of processing, but no more than this (p.267). In the Postface, Sperber and Wilson distinguish their Principle from the Cooperative Principle very explicitly. 'Understanding and being understood' is the 'common goal' that speaker-hearers share, but no more than this is necessary: no common conversational goal of co-operation is required (p.268).[111]

> The existence of a common conversational goal <u>need not</u> be built into pragmatic principles. We <u>still</u> believe this is correct. (p.268, my emphasis)

The 'need not' in the first sentence is interesting because it follows an acknowledgement that 'most' verbal exchanges 'may' share a purpose beyond 'mere[]' understanding (p.268). But the crucial point is that such additional purposes are not necessary (conflictual and non-reciprocal exchanges are the examples they instance). Nor is relevance a 'principle' in the sense that the Cooperative Principle is. Whilst Grice's maxims are a set of norms which communicator and audience need to know and follow, relevance functions not as a general principle but as a particular presumption

which is communicated by and about every particular act of communication, it is not 'followed' and could not be violated (p.162). The 'still' in the second sentence asserts this as a continuity with their first edition position, but also presumably as a counter to anyone who might detect a 'softening' of their line. In their original formulation, the ostensive stimulus is 'the most relevant stimulus capable of fulfilling [the communicator's] intentions' (*Relevance*, first edition, p.157). But now, the ostensive stimulus is 'the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's *abilities and preferences* (Postface, p.270, my emphasis). It may not minimise the addressee's effort and the communicator 'cannot be more relevant than her own knowledge permits' (Postface, p.270). Her own effort and various 'rules of etiquette or standards of ideological correctness' may 'rule out the utterance that would be easiest to process' (p.268). Although the first edition acknowledges the role of cultural prohibitions in determining the communicator's choice of a stimulus, this is a minor qualification which does not impact on the formulation of the principle itself (*Relevance*, first edition, p.157). Here such considerations enter its form. This suggests a minor modification in how the human is defined. The idealised model of efficiency of the first edition is now more explicitly subject to certain cultural processes; though it is interesting that culture is conceived here exclusively as a barrier to the smoothest possible functioning of the process.

It is clear then that we and Sperber and Wilson have come a long way from 'ordinary', 'commonsense' intuitions about relevance. This is nowhere more clearly foregrounded than in their account of the relations between relevance and context. 'Intuitively' perhaps we assume that relevance (in the ordinary everyday sense) is context-bound: something is relevant in a context. Sperber and Wilson reverse this relation: relevance is not determined by context; context is determined by relevance. Context, the knowledges that hearers deploy in interpretation, is not fixed (comprising for example the explicit content of earlier utterances, or this plus implicated content); rather context is a 'variable' (*Relevance*, p.142). There is indeed an immediately given context - those assumptions mobilised or/and produced by the previous utterance interpretation - but this is merely an initial context which can be 'extended in different directions' (p.140). The context may include the explicit or/and implicit content of earlier utterances; likewise it maybe extended by adding to it 'the encyclopaedic entries ... of concepts already present either in the context or in the assumptions being processed' (p.140). The encyclopaedic entry for a concept contains information about the extension and/or denotation of the concept: that is about the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it' (p.86).[112] The context can also be extended by adding information about the immediately observable environment. But what is most important here is the subjunctive mood. These are <u>possible</u> contexts and

> [w]hat determines the selection of a particular context out of that range? Our answer is that the selection of a particular context is determined by the search for relevance (p.141).

This formulation effects a reversal of much pragmatic commonsense but, Sperber and Wilson argue, context cannot be fixed because if this was the case then relevance could only be assessed after interpretation has taken place and this would be inefficient. Assessment of relevance is not a goal in itself but 'a means to an end, the end being to maximise the relevance of any information being processed' (p.142).

> ... [P]eople hope that the assumption being processed is relevant ... and they try to select a context which will justify that hope: a context which will maximise relevance (p.142).

The selection of a context or contexts is itself shaped by its accessibility:

> just as processing an item of information in a context involves some effort, so accessing a context involves some effort. The less accessible a context, the greater the effort involved in accessing it and conversely (p.142).

Sperber and Wilson argue that relevance not only drives ostensive-inferential communication but explains it. Once the ostensive nature of a stimulus is mutually manifest to communicator and audience, it is also mutually manifest that the communicator has an informative intention i.e. that she intends to make manifest a set of assumptions{I}. The addressee's task is to identify this set of assumptions. They propose that one member of {I} is the presumption of relevance. However, it is not only one of {I} but 'about' {I}: it can be confirmed or disconfirmed by the other contents of{I}. Sperber and Wilson conceive the interpretative process as a procedure of hypothesis construction about the contents of {I} in order to identify the communicator's informative intention (p.165). These hypotheses are tested one by one: the order of testing being determined by the accessibility of the context in which the assumption is processed. As soon as an interpretation or 'conclusion' which confirms the initial presumption is produced, the process of hypothesis construction stops. At the start of the comprehension process, the evidence for the presumption of relevance is entirely indirect; it is entirely based on the communicators' guarantee that her stimulus is optimally relevant to the addressee. By processing the stimulus, the addressee obtains direct evidence for or against the presumption that it is optimally relevant. By the end of the comprehension process this direct evidence will have superseded the initial indirect evidence.

Utterance interpretation is a specialised kind of ostensive-inferential communication explicable in terms of relevance. Sperber and Wilson's account concerns the interpretation of what is 'said' as an inferential operation (and not only what is 'meant', to stay within the Gricean idiom). In Relevance, the latter are still dubbed implicatures but they coin 'explicature' as the term for the explicit meaning that is recovered from the utterance. The recovery and/or construction of explicatures and implicatures take place after the utterance has been decoded into a set of semantic representations (corresponding to each and every sense of the sentence uttered). The production of explicatures is necessary because, in their view,

> semantic representations are incomplete logical forms i.e. at best fragmentary representations of thoughts (p.193).

A semantic representation needs to be completed, or 'converted' into a logical form in order to be used as evidence in an inferential process. This process of completion transforms a semantic representation into an explicature.

> An explicature is an explicitly communicated assumption ... An assumption communicated by an utterance U is explicit if and only if it is a development of logical form encoded by U (p.182).

This development is achieved through inference by using contextual information to convert a semantic representation into a fully propositional form. This would include procedures of reference assignment, disambiguation and the specification of 'vague' terms. But if an utterance can encode a number of (incomplete) logical forms how is the correct or 'right' propositional form obtained?

> [T]he right propositional form is the one that leads to an overall interpretation which is consistent with the Principle of Relevance (p.184).

By contrast, an implicature is any assumption which is intentionally but not explicitly communicated i.e. any assumption which is intentionally communicated but which is not a development of a logical form encoded by the utterance (p.182). The speaker assumes that the hearer will be able to access certain assumptions, use these assumptions as a context in which the explicatures of the utterance are processed and derive certain conclusions:

(33) (a) Peter: Would you drive a Mercedes?
(b) Mary: I wouldn't drive ANY expensive car (p.194).

The main explicature of Mary's response does not directly answer Peter's question. But it does allow Peter to access encyclopaedic knowledge about cars, including expensive cars:

> which includes let us suppose, the information in (34):
>
> (34) A Mercedes is an expensive car.
>
> If processed in a context containing assumption (34), (33b) would yield the contextual implication (35):
>
> (35) Mary wouldn't drive a Mercedes (p.194).

Neither (34) nor (35) are developments of the logical form encoded in Mary's utterance (34). Rather they are implicatures.

In Sperber and Wilson's account, the explicit meaning of an utterance is neither coded nor conventional. Inference is central to all interpretation (an utterance after all may have no relevant implicatures), and this is one of the key reasons why Relevance is such a strong account of inferential communication. Further, they extend the scope of pragmatic enquiry to the zone of what is explicitly 'said', the interpretation of which can no longer be assumed.[113] What is said is far more underdetermined than pragmatics generally acknowledges. As Carston puts it: 'not only does linguistic meaning underdetermine what is meant and what is said underdetermine what is meant but '[l]inguistic meaning underdetermines what is said'.[114] This marks a central difference between Grice and Relevance, for as Carston argues, 'Grice seems to have conceived of "what is said" as fully propositional' and Carston's thesis, *Pragmatics and the Explicit-Implicit Distinction* , focuses exactly on this underdetermination and how explicatures are produced.[115] Even Levinson, whose review is otherwise consistently hostile, welcomes their characterisation of explicature because it draws attention 'to the role of contextual inference not only in language interpretation but in what many have taken to be the heart of semantics'.[116]

Sperber and Wilson's characterisations of explicature and implicature are both comparative. An explicature may be more or less explicit, depending on its relation to its explicated propositional form. Implicatures vary according to their strength of intentionality. Some but not all implicatures are fully determinate i.e. intended by the speaker who takes responsibility for their truthfulness.[117] To return to the previous example, Mary's response to Peter's question might not only mobilise the implicated premise that a Mercedes is an expensive car but that there are other cars which can be classed as expensive (Rolls Royces and Cadillacs are examples given) and that this context could give rise to implicated conclusions such as 'Mary wouldn't drive a Rolls

Royce' and 'Mary wouldn't drive a Cadillac'. Peter might also derive implicated premises and conclusions along the lines of:

> (41) People who refuse to drive expensive cars disapprove of displays of wealth.
> (42) Mary disapproves of displays of wealth (p.197).
>
> or even:
>
> (47) People who would not drive an expensive car would not go on a cruise either.
> (48) Mary would not go on a cruise (p.199).

Mary may indeed want Peter to derive (42) but her expectation that Peter would derive it must be less strong than her expectation that he would derive the conclusion that Mary would not drive any expensive car (36). Otherwise presumably, Mary could have said something like 'No, I disapprove of displays of wealth' in response to Peter's question. In Sperber and Wilson's terms she gives him somewhat less 'encouragement' to derive (42) than (36). She gives him no encouragement at all to derive the conclusion that she would not go on a cruise (48), though Peter may indeed derive this. This relativising of determinacy enables them to distinguish implicatures in terms of their relative strength:

> The strongest possible implicatures are those fully determinate premises or conclusions ... which must actually be supplied if the interpretation is to be consistent with the Principle of Relevance and for which the speaker takes full responsibility (p.199).

Strong implicatures are strongly encouraged but the hearer is not forced to supply them. The weaker the encouragement, the wider the range of possibilities and the weaker the implicatures. 'Eventually ... a point is reached at which the hearer receives no encouragement at all to supply any particular premise and conclusion ...'(p.199).

Beyond literal declaratives

Sperber and Wilson extend and enrich their account of verbal communication by considering a wide range of utterance types - interrogatives and imperatives as well as declaratives, metaphor and irony as well as 'literal' uses of language - all from the standpoint of relevance. Whilst some of these issues, for example the representation of new and shared knowledge, are topoi in pragmatics, others - direct and indirect speech for example - are not. The aim, of course, is to demonstrate the explanatory power of Relevance and its divergence from other, particularly Gricean accounts. What is also

interesting here is the focus on communicative instances where one utterance's resemblance to another is central to its interpretation - immediately suggestive in the light of intertextual theories.

Their discussion of diverse utterance types is predicated on a refinement and extension of their account of the relations between utterance and thought. Utterances are not only 'incomplete' representations of thoughts, they are always interpretations: 'an interpretive expression of a thought' and the relationship between the meaning of an utterance and the thought that it represents is only ever one of resemblance and never identity (p.230).[118] A hearer's interpretation is always an interpretation of an interpretation. It is within this framework that they distinguish literal and non-literal utterances

> ... an utterance, in its role as an interpretive expression of a speaker's thought, is strictly literal if it has the same propositional form as that thought. To say that an utterance is less than strictly literal is to say that its propositional form shares some, but not all, of its logical properties with the propositional form it is being used to interpret (p.233).

For Sperber and Wilson, the difference between literal and non-literal meaning is only one of degree: greater or lesser resemblance between utterance and thought. The degree of literalness or non-literalness is determined by relevance. Indirectness in an utterance needs to be offset by an increase in contextual effects. To describe a room as a pigsty (to take one of their examples) is not only to say that it is filthy and untidy: otherwise the speaker could have said just this.

> ... [T]he speaker must have intended to convey something more than this if the relative indirectness of the utterance is to be justified: an image, say, of filthiness and untidiness beyond the norm ... (p.236).

A metaphor does not have to be first interpreted literally and then found wanting in respect of (say) the maxim of quality, because non-literal language is not the 'other' of a default literal language. Literal and non-literal uses of language exist on a continuum from strictly literal through various types of 'looseness' of expression - approximation, certain kinds of exaggeration - through to conventionally figurative uses of language. Further, non-literal or figurative uses of language do not require particular or special skills to interpret. Nor are such uses 'special': what distinguishes a metaphor is simply that it can often generate a large number of weak implicatures and the hearer needs to take considerable responsibility for constructing them. Sperber and Wilson use these criteria to produce a comparative definition of the poetic:

> In general, the wider the range of potential implicatures and the greater the hearer's responsibility for constructing them, the more poetic the effect, the more creative the metaphor. A good creative metaphor is precisely one in which a variety of contextual effects can be retained and understood as weakly implicated by the speaker ...The result is quite a complex picture, for which the hearer has to take a large part of the responsibility, but the discovery of which has been triggered by the writer ... (p.237).

Poetic language is characterised in terms of its interpretative possibilities, which are in turn dependent on the foresight of the speaker.[119] Sperber and Wilson's account of metaphor and non-literal language demonstrates very clearly that relevance is not a rule which can be followed or flouted in Gricean terms, but 'a process which is triggered by every utterance'.[120] This alternative explanation of non-literal uses of language may in part account for the many Relevance-based accounts of poetic effects.[121]

Consistent with the notion of the literal and non-literal as a continuum is Sperber and Wilson's 'naturalistic' characterisation of style, defined in terms of the relations between cognitive effects and processing effort:

> Stylistic differences are just differences in the way relevance is achieved. (p.224).

The speaker makes assumptions about which relevant assumptions the hearer will find it easier to access, and more general assumptions about the stock of assumptions that the hearer might hold:

> (74) (a) Only amateurs can compete in the Olympics.
> ...
> (c) The Olympic Games is an international sporting competition held every four years. Only amateurs - that is, people who receive no payment for their sporting activities - can compete in the Olympic Games ... (p.218).

In each case, the speaker makes very different assumptions about what the hearer knows about the Olympic Games and amateur status. These are, for Sperber and Wilson, differences of style: differences in contextual effects and processing effort which are determined by the speaker's assumptions about the hearer. Such utterances

> differ not so much in their import as in the amount of help they give the hearer in recovering it (p.218).

Both utterances have similar meanings in the sense that their propositional forms logically resemble one another. Style also varies depending on the extent to which it may 'constrain or guide the hearer's search for relevance' (p.218). Very indirect responses to questions, for example, might encourage a 'particular line of processing'

far more strongly than a direct answer (p.219). Sperber and Wilson contrast three possible answers to the question 'Is Jack a good sailor'

(b) *Mary*: Yes he is.
(c) *Mary*: ALL the English are good sailors.
(d) *Mary*: He's English ...

> In saying (75c), for example, Mary not only expects Peter to access and use the assumptions that Jack is English and infer that Jack is a good sailor; she also encourages him to speculate on, to derive some additional conclusions from the assumption that the English are good sailors. In saying (75d), by contrast she behaves as if the assumption that all the English are good sailors were mutually manifest to her and Peter and more manifest than the assumption that Jack is English (p.219).

The most indirect reply to the question, (d), guides the hearer to consider certain assumptions most strongly. Further, although in each of (b) to (d), the speaker indicates that she thinks that Jack is a good sailor, (b) (c) and (d) are not alternative ways of 'saying the same thing'. While the speaker's belief that Jack is a good sailor is one of the assumptions communicated by the utterance in each case, it is not the foregrounded assumption in either (c) or (d) which themselves differ in terms of the assumptions which are foregrounded and the expectations which are made of the hearer:

> Style arises, we maintain, in the pursuit of relevance (p.219).

Their definition of style is therefore expansive, taking account of any expectation that the speaker makes of the hearer which is intentionally explicit or implicit in the utterance. Style is a characteristic of all language use, which in turn is governed by relevance. Further, in keeping with their notion that the speaker can choose one stimulus from a possible range (depending on the speaker's expectations), this approach assumes that there is a propositional core of meaning which can be expanded, contracted, versioned in a number of ways depending on the expectations of speaker-hearers. Sperber and Wilson's definition of style is also markedly different from Grice's. As noted above, the maxim of manner is the only place where form or 'style' is acknowledged, and the default model of language assumes communication is a 'maximally effective exchange of communication'.[122]

It is through this characterisation of style that Sperber and Wilson develop their distinction between 'interpretive' and 'descriptive' language use. An utterance is used descriptively if it represents some state of affairs (or desirable state of affairs) which it describes. An utterance can also be used interpretively, to represent something it resembles: another utterance (p.227). Direct quotation (direct speech), indirect speech, summary and translation are all characterised as a set of relations between the

utterance that is being represented and the utterance that is used to represent it (pp.227-229). A direct quotation has a linguistic and semantic identity with the utterance. An indirect quotation, they argue, is not semantically identical - presumably because of the backshifting of tenses and shift from first to third person - but its propositional form is the same. In the case of a summary, the relationship is looser. The summary does not have the semantic or propositional form as the utterance but, they argue, if the summary of the utterance is faithful,

> ... the propositional forms, though different must resemble one another: they must share some logical properties, have partly identical contextual implications in some contexts, for example (p.228).

The degree of resemblance between the utterance and the utterance that it represents varies: from identity to a minimal degree of resemblance below which the utility of the utterance as a representation comes into question (p.229). In each case the utterance is an interpretation of some or all of the linguistic, semantic and logical properties of the utterance being represented.

An interpretive utterances is echoic, a term immediately suggesting parallels with intertextual theories: it echoes or resembles another utterance. Further, echoic utterances are not only interpretations of existing utterances but second-degree interpretations of interpretations, because every utterance is an interpretation of a thought of the speaker (p.238). Sperber and Wilson characterise not only the various modes of the reporting of speech and thought as echoic, but also irony which is 'primarily designed to ridicule the opinion echoed' (p.241). To take their own example:

> (112) (a) He: It's a lovely day for a picnic.
> [They go for a picnic and it rains.]
> (b) She (sarcastically): It's a lovely day for a picnic indeed ...
>
> The speaker of (112b) manifestly believes that it is not a lovely day for a picnic. From this it follows that it was wrong of her companion to say that it was a lovely day for a picnic, that his judgement has been unsound ... and so on. The recovery of these implicatures depends, first, on a recognition of the utterance as echoic; second on an identification of the source of the opinion echoed; and third on a recognition that the speaker's attitude to the opinion expressed is one of rejection of disassociation (p.240).

Whilst the last of these 'recognitions' relates specifically to echoic utterances, the account of implicature recovery summarises the interpretative requirements of any echoic utterance.

Sperber and Wilson's interest in echoic utterances and interpretive use (in both senses) is evidenced in some of their earliest work together, as well as in Sperber's recent writings on metarepresentation as a fundamental and evolved cognitive capacity which can be understood as a development. In their 1981 article, 'Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction', they follow a similar line of reasoning and align irony with parody: both are instances of 'mention' rather than 'use'.[123] They also offer a richer characterisation of the echoic:

> Some are immediate echoes and others delays: some have their source in actual utterances, other in thoughts or opinions; some have a real source, others an imagined one, whereas others have a vaguer origin.[124]

They also argue that their approach can better explain a number of commonsense and linguistic phenomena associated with irony, for example: the notion of an ironical tone of voice and, the 'switch in style of register' which is often a feature of ironical utterances.[125] This makes sense, they argue, precisely because irony is an instance of mention. They do not suggest exactly how the source of the echo might be identified however, or whether the identification or construction of the actual source is a necessary condition of interpretation. The identification of interpretive modes of language use seems to mark a congruence (noted above) with intertextual theories: a recognition of the role that utterance resemblance plays in the production and interpretation of meaning. But there is also an immediate divergence: in Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, <u>all</u> utterances are 'echoic'; there is no place for the category of the 'descriptive utterance' in Sperber and Wilson's terms. These are issues to which I will return to in chapter three.

Sperber's recent work on metarepresentation can be viewed as the broader framework in which the account of the echoic is elaborated.[126] His accounts of metarepresentation not only make the production and interpretation of echoic utterances possible, they also provide a cognitive and evolutionary rationale for Relevance theory. In a recent seminar, Sperber proposed a definition of metarepresentation in the form of a cautionary tale for ethnographers.[127] An ethnographer wants to discover the myth-of-origins of a particular tribe and seeks out the relevant elder. He then asks him something along the lines of 'how did you come to be'. The elder replies that he is not <u>that</u> old. But by rephrasing the question in a version of 'what is the story about how you came to be', the ethnographer is immediately presented with the story. This narrative anecdote nicely illustrates the othering that ethnography and anthropology may effect on unfamiliar cultures, and particularly the assumption that the beliefs of the other are always literally held. But it also illustrates what Sperber means by

metarepresentation: a particular kind of representation of a representation.[128] 'The human metarepresentational capacity ... is, first and foremost a capacity to represent the *content* of representations.'[129] Metarepresentations do not represent a particular state of affairs which they describe 'but representations (mental, public, or abstract) the contents of which they serve to render.'[130] Therefore the italicised expressions of 'Mary believes that *she is seriously ill*' represents a mental representation of Mary's.

> A fully-fledged metarepresentational capability such as the one found in human languages and in human thinking is based on the possibility of interpreting any expression-token as representing another token of the same expression or expression-type, or more generally some expression type or token it resembles in relevant respects.[131]

The use of an utterance which resembles another utterance is predicated on such an ability.

In various texts, Sperber outlines the evolutionary rationale for just such a 'full-fledged' metarepresentational capacity. The ability to represent the content of the mental states of others and various kinds of public representations as interpretations as opposed to as descriptions, is, Sperber argues, central to various complex actions and processes, for example, avoiding being deceived, taking up various attitudes towards beliefs - believing (at various degrees of strength), doubting and disbelieving - and persuading.[132] Sperber also reasons that metarepresentational ability must have preceded the development of language, in evolutionary terms: if language (conceived, of course, as en-de-coding in the strict sense of code-message pairing) had preceded metarepresentation, then metarepresentational ability could not have developed, because en-de-coding is not a metarepresentational process.[133] As might be expected, a general cognitive ability is proposed as central and language as subsequent and dependent. Indeed, Sperber seems to suggest that the ability to metarepresent is the most distinctive criterion of the human; and that ostensive-inferential communication is metarepresentational 'through and through':[134]

> When we, modern humans, communicate verbally, we decode what the words mean in order to find out what the speaker meant. Discovering sentence meaning is just a means to an end. Our true interest is in the speaker's meaning. A speaker's meaning is a mental representation entertained by the speaker which she intended the hearer to recognise and to which she intends him to take some specific attitude (e.g. accept as true). Verbal understanding consists in forming a metarepresentation of a representation of the speaker ... Linguistic comprehension is an inferential task using decoded material as evidence. The inferences involved are about speaker meaning, that is, are aimed at metarepresentational conclusions.[135]

Sperber's accounts of metarepresentational ability and its development can be seen as an attempt to ground Relevance in a plausible cognitive and evolutionary psychological framework, and also to strengthen the claim that ostensive-inferential communication is the strongest explanatory model of utterance production and interpretation. But the synopsis above also captures many of the general features of Relevance theory: the necessary but limited scope of en-de-coding; the ostensive character of utterance production and the role of this ostensiveness in interpretation; the notion that the utterance is evidence for an inferential process; and, the centrality of speaker meaning (as opposed to utterance or utterance-type meaning) in their account of communication. What is missing here is relevance: a presumption communicated by every utterance which is verified or confirmed by the interpretative process. This interpretative process is itself governed by relevance, which, like any other cognitive process, 'tends to be geared to the maximisation of the cumulative relevance of the inputs it processes' (Postface to the second edition, p.261). The balancing of processing costs and benefits drives the amplification and completion of semantic representations into fully propositional forms - explicatures - as well as the production of implicatures, including the mobilisation of any required contexts. The tendency to maximisation explains cognitive activity as apparently diverse as the smell of gas or a complex written discourse. Relevance is, to say the least, an elegant theory.

Pragmatic criticisms

The summary above also illustrates three issues which are contentious in discussions of Relevance: the role of the principle that is not a Principle, relevance itself; the characterisation of the cognising subject that Relevance assumes, seemingly exclusively rational; and the role of intention in the interpretative process. It is not surprising that both the character and explanatory force of relevance has excited considerable criticism. Even Alastair Fowler, whose review title celebrates 'A New Theory of Communication', suggests that Sperber and Wilson should have considered alternatives to the 'easiest path' interpretation.[136] Trevor Pateman makes the same point. Both seem to ignore the cognitive gains that are balanced against processing costs.[137] Levinson, more seriously, proposes that relevance is circular. The number of contextual effects which a stimulus can produce is 'unrestricted in value' (unless context is itself 'artificially' limited), it is relevance which restricts context and therefore 'constructs the basis for assessing Relevance'.[138] He goes on to argue that it is also an inconsistent principle: sometimes it seems to have a predetermined value and contextual effects are produced until that value is satisfied; sometimes the costs have a threshold value so that the first interpretation congruent with least effort is chosen.[139]

More generally speaking, does relevance explain everything that it is supposed to? These are issues to which I will return in chapter three, but it would certainly seem that the interpretation of poetic language (with its 'gains' of many weak implicatures) does not seem to square with the 'threshold value' which clearly obtains on many occasions - another reason perhaps for the Relevance-theoretic interest in poetic effects.

These issues can only be adequately addressed if the role of intention in the production and interpretation of meaning are raised in a critical form. Indeed, the relationship between metarepresentation and inferential communication becomes fully explicit only when the central role of intention is acknowledged: the hearer forms metarepresentations of the speaker's intentions. Relevance is clearly a strongly intentionalist account of communication. It is not simply that hearers or readers attribute or 'construct' the intentions of speakers and writers, it is that these are central to successful communication and, indeed, to defining the limits of communication per se.[140] Only the contextual effects deemed to have been encouraged (strongly or weakly) by the speaker are recognised as communicated.[141] But even if this distinction is accepted, it does not take any real account of how difficult it might be to distinguish between the two in interpretative scenarios. This is acknowledged to be an issue, for example by Billy Clark, who argues that this difficulty is precisely what makes poetic language an interesting test-case for Relevance.[142] But it is interesting that this acknowledgement seems to assume that most other types of language do not present such a problem.

The centrality of intention to Relevance has been variously attacked. Levinson sees their absence of interest in what he terms 'default' meaning as a fundamental problem: their exclusive focus on speaker meaning blinds them to the contribution of, for example, Generalised Conversational Implicatures.[143] Jacob L. Mey and Mary Talbot are likewise critical of their refusal to acknowledge the role of convention in the production and interpretation of meaning. These are issues to which I will return in chapter three from the standpoint of intertextuality; but there are a set of problems with intention which are generated by the internal logic of Relevance and which require noting here. First, although there is a strong commitment to specifying the detail of the interpretative process and its relation to intention, at times there seems to be an almost naive confidence that the intentions of the communicator (which are recognised as potentially and frequently complex) can be successfully communicated: thoughts are precise though their 'public' representations are clearly not. Linked to this is an apparent conflict between the delimitation and specification of interpretative possibilities that intention is supposed to make strongly probable, and the indeterminacy of the utterance as concept. Utterances are vague and ambiguous evidence about a speaker's thought, interpretive expressions of a speaker's thought and so on. This is certainly a

powerful challenge to the classical en-de-coding model, as is the proposal that if communication is successful the hearer will entertain thoughts similar but not identical to the speaker's own. But does it not also undermine the possibility of 'recuperating' what is intentionally, as opposed to unintentionally communicated? This may account for the shifting terms that are employed to represent this process: most frequently 'recovery' as might be expected, but also on occasion 'construction'.[144]

Finally, the seemingly exclusively rational character of Relevance-person. Although Sperber and Wilson claim that human inference is 'less a logical process than a form of suitably constrained guesswork', logic is clearly central to their account.[145] Within their scheme, concepts require logical entries and utterances require propositional formulation so that they can function within an inference procedure and enter into relations with other assumptions. A number of commentators have criticised what might be termed the 'hyper-rationalism' of their model: '[t]he underlying assumption is that all knowledge lies in deductive relations among linguistic structures'.[146] It is perhaps pertinent to contrast this with the associative conceptual networks operating in Kintsch's constraint-satisfaction model, which are precisely not predicated on logical relations.[147] Talbot and Mey reprove Sperber and Wilson for their characterisation of the subject as wholly rational, instancing the Freudian concept of disavowal in an example which demonstrates both the difficulties which an exclusively rational model can encounter and the problem of intention.[148] This in turn draws attention to their characterisation of the 'echoic' utterance: one which echoes another's utterance and is nevertheless easily distinguishable from the speaker's. It is never, it would seem, evidence of the speaker as a divided subject. Sperber's recent writings on evolutionary psychology accent the role of rationality further. In 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective', he hypothesises the evolution of a 'logical module' on the grounds that communication, whilst offering innumerable cognitive gains, is also hugely risky. 'Deception' and 'manipulation' are so 'ubiquitous' in communication that the development of some apparatus for the testing of arguments was required, if the benefits were not to outweigh the dangers.[149] It is also not surprising that Sperber as an anthropologist should himself feel required to develop an adequate account of the topos of irrational beliefs which is consistent with the fundamental rationality that he assumes of the human subject. The very existence of irrational beliefs requires explanation: given the logical relations of knowledge that Relevance proposes, irrational beliefs should be gradually weakened and finally cancelled as they enter into relations with rational knowledge and beliefs.[150] The absence or avoidance of unrational or irrational processes in communication is an issue to which I will return in the next chapter.

The gap between sentence and utterance meaning on which pragmatics is predicated is the starting point for Relevance as is the commitment to explain the processes of interpretation - Relevance is a strong pragmatic theory in the sense identified at the beginning of the chapter. Its distinctiveness lies first in its characterisation of language: the utterance always underdetermines speaker meaning and an utterance is always-already an interpretation of a speaker's thought. This makes inference central to all interpretation - hence explicatures - a process which can function independently of a linguistic code. What is distinctive about linguistic communication is that the evidence for the inferencing process comprises semantic representations and that every utterance communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance. Relevance is not a principle to 'apply', in marked contrast with the Cooperative Principle. Nor can relevance be 'flouted'. All modes of language use inhabit a continuum which can be understood in terms of the relations between processing costs and benefits.

Relevance's strong appeal lies in the characterisation of inference as fundamentally different from decoding and, through this, in its specification of the distinctive questions and problems that an inferential account of interpretation must address and resolve. How is knowledge mobilised and/or constructed in an inferential procedure? Why do hearers reach one set of conclusion-interpretations rather than another (given the myriad of conclusions that can be derived from the same premises)? Why does interpretation 'stop'? Its strength also lies in the explicit and detailed account of the interpretative process - a profound weakness in intertextual accounts which Relevance further serves to foreground.

There are, as I have noted, certain immediate congruences between inferential theories, particularly Relevance, and intertextual ones: a shared starting point - a dissatisfaction with en-de-coding, a belief in the constitutive polysemy or ambiguity of the utterance; comparable rhetorical approaches which centre on text-context relations; and, what appear to be, comparable arguments and formulations - I am thinking particularly here of Relevance's insistence on the non-identity between the representations of speaker and hearer within a communicative process. The intertextual characterisation of textual production as variation and transformation likewise suggests non-identity. It also suggests that the identification and/or construction of relations of resemblance (similarities and differences) between the text being interpreted and others is central to the interpretative process. Can such a process be modelled in inferential terms? Other questions intervene however before this one can be addressed. Are these apparent similarities between intertextual and inferential theories substantive? Can such parallels form the basis for an inferential account of intertextual interpretation, a synthesis of inferential and intertextual theories? Inferential accounts clearly expose a set of problems in intertextual ones, but intertextual theories present another

perspective from which to view Relevance (and inferential theories). What additional problems might such a perspective raise? These are the questions that the next chapter will address.

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[1] Paul Grice, 'Meaning Revisited' in *Studies in the Way of Words*, (Cambridge MA; Harvard UP, 1989), p.298.

[2] Gert Rickhart, Wolfgang Schnotz and Hans Strohner, *Introduction to Inferences in Text Processing* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1985), p.5.

[3] Pragmatics is defined as 'language use' in the *Handbook of Pragmatics Manual*, edited by Jef Verschueren, Jan Ola Östman and Jan Blommaert (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Company, 1995), p.1. Levinson also invokes this definition ('the study of language usage') in *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983), p.5. He then goes on to offer the sentence plus context definition (pp.18-19).

[4] Various commentators have classified Voloshinov and Bakhtin as pragmaticians. For example, in *Bakhtinian Thought*, Simon Dentith classifies Voloshinov's concerns with language as shared with 'sociological pragmatics', but then goes on to say that sociology is, in significant part absent from contemporary pragmatics (p.28). Trevor Pateman, in 'Pragmatics in Semiotics: Bakhtin / Voloshinov' claims Voloshinov as the founder of pragmatics, *Journal of Literary Semantics*, XVIII / 2 (1989), pp.203-15.

[5] The contrast is with knowledge of language: syntactic, semantic and, potentially, pragmatic. 'Non-linguistic' knowledge makes no explicit claim about how other types of knowledge (logical, cultural etc.) are represented and is not to be confused with pre-linguistic or pre-discursive knowledge.

[6] As in the contrast between linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge given above, I am representing pragmatics as far as possible in this chapter in its own discourses, hence 'communication'.

[7] Lawrence Horn, 'Pragmatic Theory' in *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey: Volume One: Linguistic Theory: Foundations*, edited by Frederick J. Newmeyer, (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), pp. 113-145, p.113.

[8] Lawrence Horn, p.114.

[9] Horn, p.114.

[10] As an instance of the broad scope of such topics, Horn, in the Cambridge Survey, refers to the thesis of M. Enc (*Tense without Scope: an Analysis of Nouns as Indexicals*, University of Wisconsin, 1981) who argued that nouns should be treated as indexicals, p.117.

[11] Horn, p.114, citing Y. Bar-Hillel, 'Out of the Pragmatic Wastebasket', *Linguistic Inquiry* 2, (1971), pp.401-7.

[12] Robyn Carston, 'Pragmatics and the Explicit-Implicit Distinction', (London University thesis, 1998), p.10.

[13] *Handbook of Pragmatics Manual*, p.xi and p.1.

[14] Handbook of Pragmatics, p.8 where Leech's definition is quoted: '... grammar (the abstract formal system of language) and pragmatics (the principles of language use) are complementary.'

[15] It also incorporates sections of Speech Act Theory and Relevance Theory, the latter written by Diane Blakemore (pp.443-53). For a detailed overview of conversational analysis (CA), including its relation to discourse analysis (DA), see Levinson, *Pragmatics*, chapter six. Critical Discourse Analysis or CDA is a more recent formulation, particularly associated with the work of Norman Fairclough which is ranged against many of the contemporary currents in contemporary DA. For Fairclough, see 'Discourse and Text: Linguistic and Intertextual Analysis within Discourse Analysis' in Discourse and Society 3, 2 (1992), pp.193-219 which draws on Bakthin's work to challenge existing practices within Discourse Analysis, particularly as exemplified in the journal *Discourse and Society*. I will return to text or discourse comprehension below.

[16] The classic references are J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) and J. R. Searle, *Speech Acts* (Cambridge, CUP, 1969). See also Searle, 'Indirect Speech Acts' in *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts* edited by P. Cole and J. L. Morgan (New York: Academic Press, 1975). For a detailed overview see Levinson, *Pragmatics*, chapter five; for an

example of speech act theory proposed as a general pragmatic theory of utterance production and interpretation, see Jenny Thomas, *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics* (London: Longman, 1995).

[17] For a general overview of the field which focuses on the role of inference in text comprehension, see *Inferences in Text Processing* , edited by Rickhart and Strohner.

[18] There is a parallel here with the problem I raised in relation to the 'word' as it is conceptualised in Bakhtin and Kristeva in chapter one.

[19] Walter Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998).

[20] Much of Levinson's recent work focuses on what he terms utterance-type meaning and in particular generalised conversational implicatures: implicatures which are relatively independent of context. See in particular, *Presumptive Meanings: the Theory of Generalised Conversational Implicature* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000). I will discuss this further below, but what is important here is that Levinson is trying to argue that accounts of speaker meaning have limited explanatory power.

[21] Jacob L. Mey, *Pragmatics: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p.36.

[22] *Pragmatics: An Introduction*, p.31.

[23] 'The context is not just a widening of the sentential perspective it is the total social setting in which the speech event takes place ... ' (Mey, p.31).

[24] See for example Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, pp.87-8.

[25] Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition* , pp.34-7.

[26] On Ducrot's autonomy from and congruence with Grice, see Lawrence Horn, *Pragmatic Theory in Linguistics: the Cambridge Survey Volume 1: Linguistic Theory: Foundations* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p.117.

[27] See for example, Rickhart, Schnotz and Strohner, *Introduction to Inferences in Text Processing,* pp.6-7.

[28] E. J. Lemmon, *Beginning Logic* (Wokingham: Van Nostran Reinhold, 1965), p.1.

[29] *Relevance*, p.65.

[30] Paul Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', *Studies in the Way of Words* (Cambridge MA: Harvard UP), pp.22-24.

[31] Kintsch, *Comprehension: a Paradigm for Cognition*, pp.189-193.

[32] Lemmon, p.8.

[33] Kintsch, *Comprehension: a Paradigm for Cognition*, pp.192-3.

[34] K. I. Manktelow and D. E. Over, *Inference and Understanding: A Philosophical and Psychological Perspective* (London: Routledge, 1990), p.40. From a different perspective, see also Lecercle's discussion of 'gapping' in *The Long Divorce*, a thriller by Edmund Crispin in *Interpretation as Pragmatics*, pp.204-6.

[35] I will discuss this in some detail below.

[36] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, p.97.

[37] Robyn Carston, *Pragmatics and the Explicature - Implicature Distinction* (London University thesis, 1998), p.173.

[38] Grice, 'Meaning Revisited', *Studies in the Way of Words* , p.298.

[39] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, p.132.

[40] Grice, 'Meaning', *Studies in the Way of Words*, pp.216-217. Note the inverted commas around 'sign' which suggests convenience and ambivalence. I will return to this point directly below.

[41] Grice, 'Meaning', p.219.

[42] Grice, 'Meaning', pp.213-4.

[43] Grice, 'Meaning', p.214.

[44] Grice's other example here makes the translative aspect of this formulation even more obvious: "That remark, 'Smith couldn't get on without his trouble and strife', meant that Smith found his wife indispensable." (p.214).

[45] Grice, 'Meaning', p.215.

[46] 'Meaning' is dated 1948 and 1957 in *Studies in the Way of Words* (p.vii). The William James lectures were delivered at Harvard in 1967, although they appear in *Studies* in a revised version dated 1987 (Preface, p.v).

[47] 'Logic and Conversation' in *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.22.

[48] 'Logic and Conversation', p.24.

[49] 'Logic and Conversation', p.26.

[50] All the maxims are elaborated on pp.26-27 of 'Logic and Conversation'.

[51] 'Logic and Conversation', pp.30-33.

[52] On the distinctions between opting out, violation and flouting, see 'Logic and Conversation' p.30.

[53] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.33.

[54] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, pp.114-115.

[55] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.39.

[56] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.39.

[57] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.31.

[58] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.39, my emphasis.

[59] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, p.127.

[60] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.25.

[61] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', pp.37-8.

[62] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', pp.29.30.

[63] Grice, 'Meaning Revisited' in *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.298.

[64] Grice, 'Meaning', p.221.

[65] Grice, 'Postwar Oxford Philosophy' in *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.172.

[66] Grice, 'Postwar Oxford Philosophy', p.172.

[67] 'If I philosophise about the notion of cause, or about perception, or about knowledge and belief, I expect to find myself considering, among other things, in what sort of situations we should, in our ordinary talk, be willing to speak (or again be unwilling to speak) of something as causing something else to happen or ...' ('Postwar Oxford Philosophy', p.172).

[68] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', pp.24-5.

[69] See, for example, Ernest Gellner's classic critique, *Words and Things* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul), 1959; revised edition, 1979.

[70] Carston, *Pragmatics and the Implicit-Explicit Distinction* , pp.99-101.

[71] Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', p.28.

[72] Grice does not prohibit or himself refrain from the use of 'technical' terms, rather he insists that they should always be identified as such ('Postwar Oxford Philosophy', in *Studies of the Way of Words* pp.172-3).

[73] See, for example, Levinson, *Pragmatics*, p.157, but also, more generally, *Presumptive Meanings.*

[74] Horn argues that '[t]he pragmatic principle which has yielded the most linguistic mileage (in terms of its generality, explanatory power and consequences for simplifying grammatical and lexical description) is Grice's first maxim of quantity. (*Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey*, p.117). He also invokes John Stuart Mill as Grice's precursor in relation to the maxim of quantity. In *Logic*, Mill discusses the utterance 'I saw some of the your children today' as 'meaning' not all.

[75] Horn, for example, like Levinson, is committed to the explanatory power of clashes within a modified Gricean framework. See, for example, Horn, 'Pragmatic Theory' in *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey*, p.132. However Carston argues, in 'Quantity Maxims and Generalised Implicature', *Lingua* , 96, (1995), pp.213-244 , that clashes are not a desirable mode of explanation of pragmatic phenomena and that a 'deeper principle' should be sought (pp.228-229).

[76] See Levinson, *Pragmatics*, pp.131-2 and Levinson and P. Brown, 'Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena' in *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction* edited by E. Goody (Cambridge, CUP, 1978). In 'Logic and Conversation', Grice acknowledges the importance of politeness but argues that although 'be polite' is 'normally observed by participants in talk-exchanges' and can generate non-conventional implicatures, it is of a different character to the maxims which are specific to communication (p.28).

[77] Cited in Talbot J. Taylor and Deborah Cameron, *Analysing Conversation: Rules and Units in the Structure of Talk* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1987), p.92.

[78] Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*, pp.2-3.

[79] Kintsch, *Comprehension*, p.4.

[80] Kintsch, *Comprehension*, p.33.

[81] Kintsch, *Comprehension*, p.99.

[82] Kintsch, *Comprehension*, p.99.

[83] Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986). A second edition was published in 1995. This reprints the first text in the same pagination 'except for the correction of typographical errors, removal of obvious mistakes and inconsistencies, updating of existing references, and addition of a few explanatory notes' (Preface to second edition, p.viii). The important addition is a 'Postface' which sketches developments in Relevance theory and proposes certain revisions, specifically to the Principle of Relevance itself which will be discussed below. The bibliography is significantly extended to take account of work produced within the framework of the theory.

[84] This boldness continues in the 'Postface' to the second edition. Whilst acknowledging themselves grateful to commentators for their criticisms and comments, they claim '[they] find that the most serious problems with [their] theory are those [they] have discovered themselves' (*Relevance*, Postface to the second edition, p.255).

[85] See for example, Levinson, 'A Review of Relevance', *Journal of Linguistics* , 25, (1989), pp.455-472: 'Chapter two outlines a speculative psychology of inference likely to leave psychologists, logicians, semanticists and computer scientists in some degree of apoplexy' (p.457).

[86] Alaistair Fowler, 'A New Theory of Communication', *London Review of Books*, (March 30, 1989) pp16-17, p.16.

[87] Relevance first acquired a separate index heading in *Linguistics and Language Behaviour Abstracts* (Bethseda: Cambridge Scientific Abstracts) in 1998 (Volume 32). In Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey, Relevance is discussed in some detail in Volume 3: *Language: Psychological and Biological Aspects* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988) in an essay entitled 'Language and Cognition', pp.38-68, written by Robyn Carston, a kep proponent of the theory and discussed below.

[88] Sperber and Wilson have produced a number of articles, jointly and individually on Relevance. See this bibliography and the second edition of *Relevance*, pp.315-318. But a number of other pragmaticians have contributed to the development of the theory, perhaps most notably Robyn Carston and Diane Blakemore whose work is discussed below. The Postface notes and bibliography to the second edition provides a useful survey of Relevance up to 1995. Francisco Yus's on-line bibliography *Relevance Theory Online* at http://www.ua.es/dfing/rt.htm is ongoing.

[89] See in particular, *Relevance*, pp. 72-89.

[90] *Relevance*, p.46.

[91] See for example Levinson, *Pragmatics* , p.159. In a discussion of implicature and metaphor he speculates that a pragmatic theory of metaphor is 'perhaps too much to ask of what is clearly a perfectly general and crucial psychological capacity that operates in many domains of human life, namely the ability to think analogically'. Important here is the emphasis on general psychological capacity and the situating of certain types of questions about interpretation within the field of cognition.

[92] Jef Verschueren, Introduction, p.10. His comments come in the context of a set of criticisms of cognitive approaches, most importantly the ways in which they ignore the social dimensions of language use. Relevance theory is one of his examples - an issue to which I will return below and in chapter three - but he is also critical of those who are interested in social explanations but ignore cognitive questions.

[93] *Relevance*, p.46.

[94] The Postface to the second edition also offers a brief evolutionary rationale for relevance (pp.261-2). Sperber's texts on these topics will be referenced as discussed.

[95] Sperber and Wilson never capitalise relevance when they are discussing its operation. They do capitalise it when they are discussing the First and Second Principles of Relevance (discussed below). I have followed their notation in both cases. Therefore when I speak of 'Relevance', I am referring to the theory as a whole. I also use *Relevance* as a shorthand for the book itself.

[96] In the first edition of *Relevance*, Sperber and Wilson use the term 'contextual effects', but in the Postface (p.265) to the second edition they note the change: '[c]ontextual effects in an individual are cognitive effects (a phrase we have used in articles written after 1986).'

[97] 'Assumptions' is intended to mark that the knowledge the subject has may or may not be true. In the first edition, Sperber and Wilson appear unconcerned with the truth and falsity of assumptions but in the Postface to the second edition they note that this was an error. As is discussed later on in this chapter the status of the input i.e. the assumptions being processed remains unchanged from the first edition, but they discuss the truth status of output in rather different terms.

[98] There is a clear parallel here with Grice's definition of what is necessary for 'A to mean something by x', particularly Grice's insistence that the audience's recognition of A's intention 'play[s] its part in inducing the belief' (Grice, 'Meaning', *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.219). For both, intention is not simply central to communication in general but its recognition is central to the interpretative process - an issue to which I will return.

[99] Stephen Levinson, *Pragmatics* and K. Bach and R. Harmish, *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts* (Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 1979). Sperber and Wilson's criticisms of negative characterisation also include Geoffrey Leech, *Principles of Pragmatics* (London: Longman, 1983); Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse Analysis* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983); and R. de Beaugrande and W. Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics*, (London: Longman, 1981).

[100] Having made this claim they immediately invoke Fodor's First Law of the Non-existence of Cognitive Science: the more global ... a cognitive process is, the less anybody understands it' (*Relevance*, p.66). Given that a global thought process by its very nature can involve evidence which can be very remote in relation to the object or goal of cognisance, it very difficult to speculate plausibly about how such processes work. Sperber and Wilson go on to add that '[they] do not entirely share this pessimism' (p.66). Fodor's example of a global thought process, scientific theorising, is, they contend, not the most appropriate model for characterising a central thought process. Utterance comprehension differs in two important respects from it. It is virtually instantaneous (unlike scientific theorising which can 'take all the time in the world' (p.66), meaning that only a limited amount of evidence is actually taken into account; second, utterances come 'from a helpful source', whereas the material for scientific hypothesis, they claim, comes from nature, further limiting the range of evidence that may be entertained. Hence they conclude it is amenable to study. However in the notes to the second edition, they refine their position, declaring that they would not now make such a sharp distinction between input and central systems, given the growing evidence that central systems should be analysed in modular terms (p.293).

[101] Rickhart, Strohner and Schnotz, Introduction, *Inferences in Text Processing*, p.15.

[102] See *Relevance*, pp.96-103.

[103] Lemmon, p.19.

[104] Stephen Levinson, 'A Review of Relevance', *Journal of Linguistics*, p.457. Richard E. Grandy in his review 'Understanding Understanding' makes the same point, likewise arguing there is very little evidence for the limitation on inferential procedures that Sperber and Wilson propose (*Times Literary Supplement*, September 19, (1986), p.1037.

[105] 'A Review of Relevance', *Journal of Linguistics*, p.457.

[106] Eve E. Sweetener, 'Review of *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*', *American Anthropologist*, 90 (September 1988). pp.744-7455, p.744.

[107] This is one of the key clarifications in the Postface though it does not make any difference to the theory as a whole: 'Not one but two Principles of Relevance' (p.260): the first (above) cognitive; the second, specifically communicative.

[108] *Relevance*, p.119.

[109] *Relevance*, pp.48-9.

[110] The Postface to the second edition modifies the First Principle in relation to truth. In the first edition, the truth or falsity of assumptions was bracketed as irrelevant but in the Posface, Sperber and Wilson confess themselves uneasy about this move. For humans who are reflective about their knowledge, its truth or falsity must matter, and besides they argue, false information is often information that is not worth having (p.264). Sperber and Wilson argue that it is the truth of the output or interpretation that is fundamental. Many inputs such as phenomena cannot be true or false; we can derive true conclusions from false premises; it is our interpretations of utterances that are true (or not true), not utterances themselves (p.264). This is congruent with Sperber and Wilson's focus on assumption relations.

[111] This reiterates their claim in the first edition that there is no "'common purpose or set of purposes', or at least a mutually accepted direction' over and above the aim of achieving successful communication'(p.161) - the two sets of citation marks indicate a quotation from Grice.

[112] Sperber and Wilson argue that the information which can be stored in memory is of three distinct types. Each concept has a logical entry (as noted above) which 'consists of a set of deductive rules which apply to [the] logical forms of which that concept is a constituent'; an encyclopaedic entry (as

above) and a lexical entry which 'contains information about the natural-language counterpart of the concept: the word or phrase of natural language which expresses it' (p.86).

[113] In their Postface, Sperber and Wilson propose that detailed work on the recovery of explicatures (i.e. the inferential procedures of reference assignment, disambiguation and enrichment) as one of the important contributions that Relevance has made, citing Robyn Carston's work as evidence of this (p.257).

[114] Robyn Carston, *Pragmatics and the Explicit-Implicit Distinction*, p.19.

[115] Carston, *Pragmatics and the ...*, p.23.

[116] Levinson, 'A Review of Relevance', *Journal of Linguistics*, p.456.

[117] *Relevance*, pp.194-7. Sperber and Wilson also argue that this relative definition of determinacy distinguishes them from many other pragmaticians who presume that implicatures are fully determinate or who recognise indeterminacy but exclude it from consideration (pp.195-6).

[118] Sperber and Wilson use the variant 'interpretive' as the adjectival form of interpretation and I have followed this when discussing their concept. Elsewhere I use 'interpretative'.

[119] Sperber and Wilson's definition of poetic language includes a number of figures other than metaphor: hyperbole, metonymy, synecdoche for example, though they do not discuss these in detail (p.237). 'Forseeing' is the term they apply to an analysis of a Flaubert metaphor which I will discuss in chapter three (p.237).

[120] Neil Smith and Deirdre Wilson, 'Introduction' to *Lingua* 87 (1992), special issue on Relevance, pp.1 - 10.

[121] See for example, *Language and Literature* 5, 3 (1996), special issue on Relevance and literary style. See also David Trotter, 'Analysing Literary Prose: The Relevance of Relevance Theory, *Lingua* 87 (1992), (special issue on Relevance) pp.11-27, and Adrian Pilkington, 'Poetic Effects' in the same issue, pp.29-51.

[122] Paul Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.28. As noted above, Grice does of course acknowledge other purposes - he instances influencing and directing the actions of others - but this remains the default from which floutings are modelled.

[123] Sperber and Wilson, 'Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction' in *Radical Pragmatics*, edited by Peter Cole (New York: Academic Press, 1981), pp.295-318, pp.305-8.

[124] 'Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction', pp.309-10. The descriptive-interpretive distinction in *Relevance* is congruent with the distinction between use and mention.

[125] 'Irony and the ...', p.311.

[126] See in particular Sperber, 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective' at http://perso.club-internet.fre/sperber/metarep.htm, January 2000, and 'Anthropology and Psychology: Towards an Epidemiology of Representations' in *Explaining Culture: A Naturalistic Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

[127] Dan Sperber, seminar series at the London School of Economics, 2000.

[128] Sperber, 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective', http://perso.club-internet.fre/sperber/metarep.htm, p.1: 'Metarepresentations are representations of representations, but not all representations of representations are metarepresentations in the relevant sense.'

[129] 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective', p.1.

[130] 'Metarepresentation ... ', p.1.

[131] 'Metarepresentation ... ', pp.1-2.

[132] On the avoidance of deception and the art of persuasion see for example, 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective', p.6; on attitudes towards belief, see in particular 'The Epidemiology of Representations', in Sperber, *Explaining Culture: A Naturalistic Approach*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.87-92.

[133] 'Metarepresentation ... ' p.2.

[134] In 'Metarepresentation ...', he does not make this point explicitly but his mention of the conventional hypothesis that language is the most distinctive feature of the human species, followed by his argument that the development of a metarepresentational ability preceded language seems to suggest that he thinks that it is this (and not language) that is the most distinctive feature of humans (pp.2-4).

[135] 'Metarepresentation ... ' p.2.

[136] Fowler, 'A New Theory of Communication', *London Review of Books*, March 30 1989, p.16-17, p.16.

[137] Pateman, 'Relevance, Contextual Effects and Least Effort', *Poetics Today* , 84 (1984), pp.745-54; p.749.

[138] Levinson, 'A Review of Relevance', *Journal of Linguistics,* 25 (1989), pp.455-472; p.459.

[139] Levinson, 'A Review of Relevance', pp.462-3.

[140] Lecercle makes this important distinction in *Interpretation as Pragmatics* and argues that whilst we as hearers and readers ascribe or 'construct' intentions, we should not mistake such a process as a 'cause' (p.118). This is an issue to which I will return in chapter three.

[141] For a detailed exposition of the various modes of communicated meaning that Sperber and Wilson identify, see Sperber and Wilson, 'Linguistic Form and Relevance', *Lingua* 90 (1993), pp.1-25.

[142] In 'Stylistic Analysis and Relevance Theory', *Language and Literature* , 5, (3 (1996), pp.163-78, Clark argues that literature 'raises challenges for any theory of intentional communication' (p.163). Whilst he makes a clear distinction between implicatures and implications, where the former are distinguishable as 'mutually manifest intentionally conveyed implications' (p.164), he also suggests that the distinction between the two may be 'far from clear cut' (p.173) - hence the interest of literature and literary language. What is interesting however is that he treats literary language as a special case: the site where such distinctions may be difficult to make and where intentionality becomes problematised as an explanatory concept. By 'implication' such issues do not arise frequently in other modes of language use. I will return to this issue in chapter three.

[143] A theory of Generalised Conversational Implicatures (GCIs) and the 'default' or 'presumptive' meanings carried by them are the goals of Levinson's recent book: *Presumptive Meanings: The Theory of Generalised Conversational Implicature* . Whilst Levinson sees GCIs as a fundamental but undeveloped aspect of Grice's work, Carston and Sperber and Wilson do not think that the particular and general distinction was theoretically significant for Grice and that Relevance can handle apparent GCI phenomena without recourse to such a distinction. 'They [Sperber and Wilson] favour a continuum of cases of implicature, with some resting on very widely held and standardly available assumptions about the world, some resting on more culturally specific assumptions which are shared

by a wide range of people, through to those which are dependent on very specific and transient information'. (Carston, 'Quantity Maxims and Generalised Implicatures', *Lingua,* 96 (1995), pp. 213-244, p.230.)

[144] For example 'recovery' is used on p.194 and p.240, whereas 'construction' is used on p.237.

[145] *Relevance*, p.69

[146] Richard E. Grandy, *Times Literary Supplement*, p.1037.

[147] Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*, pp.34-7. Associative networks are not the only mode of organisation but they do allow for knowledge-relations which are not logically ordered.

[148] The example is a wife who is beaten by her husband who disavows (i.e. both knows and refuses to know or acknowledge) his hostility, Talbot and Mey, 'Computation and the Soul', *Semiotica* , 72, 3/4 (1988), pp.291-339, p.305.

[149] 'Metarepresentation...', p.6.

[150] See Sperber, 'Apparently Irrational Beliefs' in *On Anthropological Knowledge* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985) I will look at Sperber's solution to the 'problem' of irrational beliefs in chapter three.

Chapter Three: The Encounter

'Greed is good.' (Gordon Gecko in *Wall Street*)[1]

In the 1987 film *Wall Street*, the corporate trader-raider Gordon Gecko (Michael Douglas) shares his credo with a rapt audience of shareholders: 'greed is good'. This simple affirmative is not only of dialogic interest, it also furnishes evidence of an intimate relationship between intertextuality and inference. Gecko translates a conventional sin into a positive value, and in the process, asserts a definition of the good which is exclusively self- and selfishly defined. He harnesses the rhetorical force of a religious moral discourse and displaces it to affirm his own pleasure in the pursuit of what is usually classed as immoral. What is most interesting about his utterance however, is that interpretation of it relies in significant part on an inferential process: on the production of implicatures which are not coded in the utterance itself. A central component of the meaning of this utterance is that it is controversial. Its controversial character lies both in the proposition itself and in the very public context of its enunciation. It challenges 'decent' commonsense values and axioms. For 'greed is good' to be understood as controversial, some of the types of utterance that it contests must be constructed as implicatures: for example, 'greed is not good', 'greed may be an attribute of human nature but it is certainly not a virtue', 'we may be greedy but we do not admit it publicly and we certainly don't celebrate it as a value' and so on. Such implicatures are precisely not coded: they are proposed by the intertextual character of the utterance. This suggests an intimate relation between (at least) a certain class of implicatures and intertextual interpretation, but also that some implicatures are properly speaking utterances and should be treated as such. It seems indeed that the production of certain types of implicature is predicated on the hearer or reader mobilising or constructing an intertextual relation between two or more utterances.

Yet no sustained attempt exists either to think through intertextual interpretation as an inferential process or inferential processes as intertextual. This then is the goal of this and the subsequent chapters; to stage an encounter between these two theories of meaning and develop a critical synthesis. Despite the connections suggested in the example above, it should immediately be clear that inferential and intertextual accounts of meaning cannot simply be adjoined to one another: the knowledges and assumptions, logics and languages of these theories are radically different. Nor will it be possible to resolve the contradictions at some 'deeper' level, exposing the conflict as finally, merely apparent. Read through and against one another, the explanatory limits and theoretical errors of each and both are exposed. That said, these differences - substantial and substantive - should not be allowed to conceal the sites or positions of

congruence, a 'common' ground which is inhabited by both theories, even if it is rarely recognised as such. It is with this common ground that I wish to begin.

1. The 'common' ground

Inferential and intertextual theories of meaning begin at the same theoretical place: a dissatisfaction with a structuralist model of language. The limits of such a model, whether conceived as 'abstract-objectivism' or as the myth of a 'unitary' language, are a constant theme in Voloshinov and Bakhtin. The sign is not a 'self-identical signal', that is stable and stabilised within the linguistic system, but plastic and mobile as it is resignified within different contexts by different users.[2] This adaptability is indeed predicated on a linguistic system - a national language - which is a common resource of its users, but which different social constituencies make mean in different ways with different evaluative accents. The concept of the heteroglossia takes this argument further: the notion of a unitary language is a fiction, though one with real ideological force. It is Kristeva who draws out the full implications of this. Signification can never be the simple repetition or realisation of existing signifying practices: it always involves transformation. Further, Kristeva's positing of poetic language as the practice which articulates the relations between the semiotic and the symbolic, the refusing and seeking of language as the rule of Law, introduces an 'uncodable' dimension into at least some modes of discourse. In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, the chora is precisely that which cannot be codified: the pre-oedipal residue that precedes entry into the symbolic. Most importantly, it is Bakhtin's dialogic and Kristeva's intertextuality that text conceived as a realisation of a single underlying code untenable. The permutation of texts and the inscription of the heteroglossia in discourse demolish the idea that meaning is governed by any single process of encoding or decoding. Inferential accounts of meaning are also motivated by what are perceived as the explanatory limits of coded or conventional meaning; and there is an explicit point of congruence between Relevance and intertextual accounts of meaning: both make the deficits of a specifically structuralist code model their starting point. Further, Sperber's text 'Lévi-Strauss Today' where he contends that the value of Lévi-Strauss's work is precisely not its debt, real and imagined, to structuralism, echoes, though from a radically different place, Derrida's 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Human Discourses' which suggests that a central value in Lévi-Strauss's writings is the presence of a critique of structuralism, a recognition of its limits as a critical practice.[3]

Second, as already intimated above, inferential and intertextual theories both define the utterance as polysemous or semantically ambiguous. For Kristeva and Bakhtin, it is the multi-accentual sign that provides the strongest evidence of this. 'Polysemy'

marks the conflictual social and cultural relations which are inscribed and constituted in language. In pragmatics generally, it is assumed that the linguistic form of the utterance does not or does not always, fully determine its meaning: a number of possible interpretations are assumed. Interpretation is often conceived as, in significant part, a process of 'disambiguation'. In inferential accounts, these indeterminacies are absolutely central: 'The notion of inference is important because language is ambiguous, vague and fragmentary'.[4]

Third, the flaws in the code model and the polysemy of utterance make it difficult to presuppose that the hearer's interpretation of the utterance is identical with the speaker's intention and that interpretation is a recuperative process. For Kristeva and Bakhtin, there is no single or unified subject to whom a particular meaning (speaker meaning) can be attributed. The text 'speaks' from a multiplicity of places in many 'voices' or languages and no singular intention can be recovered from this polyvocality. And whilst Bakhtin's characterisation of composition as orchestration implies a measure of authorial agency, interpretation at the very least must involve the identification of multiple agencies and multiple intentions. Sperber and Wilson's provisional heuristic assumption about communication is not to assume that it works.[5] And given that their model of communication is strongly intentionalist, this means that they do not presuppose that the hearer will recover the speaker's intention. Further, this presupposition is embedded in their theory of communication: the speaker tries to make the hearer entertain certain representations which are similar to her own; the hearer does not (and cannot) recover these representations which are already 'second-order' representations of thoughts.[6]

Fourth, both inferential and intertextual theories can be characterised as rhetorical approaches, focusing on the relations between texts or utterances, contexts and those who produce and interpret them. Bakhtin and Kristeva both conceptualise context (the heteroglossia, the General Culture) as constitutive of the utterance. Kristeva's concept of the speaking subject, as socially and also psychically configured, binds questions of meaning inextricably to the question, 'who speaks?' In pragmatics, meaning is always contextually constituted and inferential accounts are no exception. The mobilisation and deployment of contextual knowledge is a central element in strong inferential accounts, as Relevance evidences. But Sperber and Wilson also define communication rhetorically in another sense. One of the key features distinguishing communication from cognition in general is its suasive aspect: the speaker seeks to make the hearer entertain similar representations to her own.[7] This definition is given further force in the context of Sperber's recent writings where he attempts to locate the suasive character of discourse in an evolutionary framework. The human capacity to metarepresent mental states and then to attribute these to others means that it is only 'a

short step, or no step at all to ... having desires about these mental states - desiring that she should believe this, desiring that he should desire that - and to forming intentions to alter the mental states of others'.[8] Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva are also bound to an understanding of discourse as suasive, but this is argued from a radically different place, made most explicit in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*: '*Without signs there is no ideology* '.[9] Any signifying practice is always suasive because it is always ideological. It is not only embedded in social relations, it takes up a position or positions in relation to some part of the social: any representation is constituted by its affirmation or/and contestation of others.

Finally, Sperber and Wilson's interest in mention and echoic utterances as interpretative modalities of language use, and Sperber's current focus on metarepresentation suggests a closer congruence between Relevance and intertextual theories of meaning than other inferential accounts. From the definition of irony as a modality of mention, to the more elaborated treatment in *Relevance* of 'echoic utterances' and resemblance, through to Sperber's current work on metarepresentation, the ways in which language can be used to represent other public representations, which are interpreted as such by hearers, is a consistent and indeed developing part of their thinking about language and culture. This enriches and focuses the theoretical encounter with intertextual theories, but, as I will show, it also foregrounds the differences between the two.

2. Inference reads intertextuality

As seen by pragmatics, and in particular by inferential accounts of meaning, intertextual theories appear at once familiar and strange. The preoccupation with the semantic 'mobility' of signs, the context-bound character of meaning, the focus on the textual inscription of context (*S/Z* is an exemplary case), and the interest in the relations between language and its users, all mark a specifically pragmatic interest in language and meaning. Yet it is also clear that this resemblance is in significant senses illusory. What is also apparent, is a set of problems which inferential theories raise for intertextuality, all of which relate to the interpretative process. These are, first, that intertextual accounts of reception tend to collapse the processes of writing and reading. Reading or interpretation is routinely 'inferred' from accounts of writing or production rather than explored as a process with its own specificity. Second, intertextual accounts of meaning ignore inference as a process which shapes both the production and reception of meaning. Third, whilst intertextual theories raise interesting issues about the contexts or conditions in which texts are consumed, there is increasingly little

attempt to provide an explicit account of how and why certain kinds of context play a role in the interpretative process.

The specificity of interpretation or, 'reading' isn't 'writing'

In the introduction, I discussed various problems with existing intertextual theories of reception, in particular, the vagueness with which reading as a concept of process is characterised. Clearly not a 'simple' decoding process, this negative definition seems to be the only certainty which such theories share. For whether reading is conceived as that 'other' production, as in Chartier, or in Barthes (in a different sense), or whether it is understand as a recontextualisation - most explicitly in Bennett and Woollacott - or as a kind of 'recoding', as it is in much of contemporary cultural studies, the interpretative processes involved in each case remain remarkably vague. This is largely because intertextual reception has largely been inertially inferred from intertextual theories of production. In one sense, intertextual theories of production make this move both possible and plausible. Voloshinov, Bakhtin, Kristeva and Barthes all liken reception to production.[10] But, as I argued earlier, there is an important difference between productive comparisons and the dissolution of their difference. It is paradoxical that contemporary studies of television and new media technologies, which pay insightful attention to medium specificity as its shapes production and reception, should also so often be unrigorous, sometimes indeed lazy, about the collapsing of production and consumption in general.[11] The former often acts to conceal the latter, as does the increasing emphasis on reading (or viewing) practices. The modalities of reading aloud or reading silently (Chartier), viewing alone or viewing with others, or repeated versus 'uncommon or unfamiliar modes of viewing', all draw attention to the importance of reading practices, but unless such practices are understood in relation to interpretative processes, it is difficult to imagine anything other than an impasse in intertextual accounts of viewing or 'use'.[12]

By contrast, pragmatics understands the processes of production and interpretation as clearly distinct. This is most strongly visible in inferential accounts of communication (though it is also marked in speech act theory). I, as a speaker, make a range of assumptions about the knowledges which you, as a hearer, might be able to 'access' or construct within a particular situation communicative situation. But this is strongly distinguishable as process from your interpretation of that utterance. Sperber and Wilson's characterisation of communication as ostensive-inferential crystallises the difference between utterance production and utterance interpretation. Utterance production involves the making manifest of an intention to communicate: it is in this sense 'ostensive'. Interpretation involves the identification of a communicative

intention. What unites these two distinct processes is relevance as principle. The specificity of interpretation emerges from the very detailed account they provide of the interpretative process which exposes the vagueness with which interpretation is formulated in intertextual theories. My point here is not that Sperber and Wilson's account of interpretation is definitive, but that it formulates interpretative procedures with such rigour. Therefore, for example, it is possible to formulate their account of inferential interpretation as 'another' production and an active process in very specific terms. The procedures of reference assignment, disambiguation and enrichment, through which explicatures are formulated, precisely 'add to' the utterance as evidence. 'New' information or knowledge, which is neither coded in the utterance nor in its explicatures, can be produced by conjoining the 'explicated' evidence of the utterance with contextual information/assumptions to derive implicatures. More generally, inferential accounts focus attention on the ways in which the 'active' processes of interpretation frequently function to delimit interpretative possibilities: interpretation is a production which is driven by the attempt to constrain interpretation. Polysemy is the condition which governs interpretation as an 'other' 'production' but this production is always involved in an attempt to delimit or fix meaning.

Intertextuality and inference

It follows from intertextuality as concept that relations of similarity and difference between the text being read and other texts must be central to the interpretative process: the reader must identify and/or construct such relations and make use of them. But how might such a process be rendered in explicit terms? The only certainty that accompanies intertextual theories is that interpretation is not simple decoding. But at the same time intertextual theories retain from structuralist linguistics the idea that meaning is some kind of coding process. Extant codes and conventions are the 'raw material' of textual production which are worked over and transformed in any particular 'utterance' or text. The meaning of a text is simultaneously underdetermined and overdetermined; underdetermined in the sense that its meaning is never self-contained or wholly 'resident' or present within it; overdetermined in the sense that the text and its meanings are an intersection and 'permutation' of extant signifying practices. Codes are rendered in one sense less stable - strict repetition or identity is impossible - but it is still coding, best understood (if imperfectly) as recoding which shapes meaning, even though the semantic effects of this determination are multiple, potentially contradictory and unpredictable. Although the recoded character of meaning in such theories inevitably produces its other (Kristeva's chora is one such instance of this), there is little consideration of the possibility that another process or processes may play a role in

the production or interpretation of texts. That said, it is Kristeva who first asserted a relation between intertextuality and inferential procedures, because of the 'redistributive (constructive-destructive)' character of the text's relations with the language in which it is situated, it 'can be better approached through logical categories rather than linguistic ones'.[13] And she goes on to define novelistic enunciation as an inferential process by which different types of language are drawn together. This formulation is certainly suggestive, but it is too vague to function as a definition of intertextuality as an inferential operation and also seems to claim the inferential process as something specific to the novel.[14]

At the beginning of this chapter, I considered an example of a controversial or contestational utterance which suggested a close relationship between intertextuality and inference. I now wish to develop this argument in order to demonstrate the centrality of implicature to intertextual interpretation in more general terms. Most simply, the oppositional or contesting utterance which is so central to Voloshinov, Bakhtin, Kristeva (and Barthes) can be understood as the 'negation' (understood here in a discursive rather than a grammatical or logical sense) of another utterance, which is strongly proposed as an implicature (or set of implicatures) by the oppositional utterance and which functions as at least one of its intertexts. I want to develop this argument through a consideration of one of Bakhtin's examples of hybrid construction, itself drawn from Dickens's *Little Dorrit:*

> That illustrious man and great national ornament, Mr Merdle, continued his shining course. It began to be widely understood that one who had done society the admirable service *of making so much money out of it*, could not be suffered to remain a commoner. A baronetcy was spoken of with confidence; a peerage was frequently mentioned.[15]

Here, what Bakhtin italicises is understood as a narratorial commentary on the 'general opinion' of 'that ... great national ornament, Mr Merdle'. A formal dissonance between the fixed phrases of a rehearsed praise and a colloquial mode of 'plain speaking' inscribe two very different representations of Merdle: as a social and public good, and, as a self-interested and self-serving individual. Bakhtin's reading emphasises the 'hypocritically ceremonial general opinion' of Merdle that is exposed by the 'authorial' commentary.[16] But what are the interpretative procedures by which such a reading is produced? The register dissonance identified above is not, in itself, enough to produce the reading that general opinion is hypocritical. To be sure, it produces two alternative and contrasting representations, and the parodic excess of the first would seem to weaken its claims to seriousness or authority. But this is not the same as the interpretative conclusion that Bakhtin (very plausibly) draws about

hypocrisy. A stronger relation between the two languages and 'opinions' is proposed, a causal relation: Merdle is considered a 'national ornament' because he makes so much money. This interpretation is an implicature; it is precisely not coded. And this implicature is necessary if the conclusion - that general opinion is hypocritical - itself an implicature, is to be inferred.

A focus on the core of the example enables a focus on how such inferences might be produced:

> It began to be widely understood that one who had done society the admirable service *of making so much money out of it*, ...

A reader must identify the utterance as controversial, if not contradictory: it challenges a certain set of non-controversial utterances. Such a classification depends on the reader identifying a certain kind of relation between this utterance and others. This in turn is dependent on the reader being able to access some of these other utterances in the form of contextual assumptions, for example, that the pursuit of self-interest and the achievement of a public/social good are often deemed incompatible. This, in turn, makes possible the accessing of related assumptions, for example that the self-interested pursuit of profit is very rarely represented as a good in itself, which make possible the implicature that the excessive approbation of Merdle masks the real reason why he is so highly valued - the money he has made - and that therefore 'general opinion' is hypocritical.[17] The initial discrepancy and apparent non-compatibility between the two representations is therefore interpreted as 'resolved' at the narratorial level: there is a causal connection between the excess of praise and the excess of profit.

What I have tried to show here is the centrality of inference to the interpretation of contestational meanings of a 'classicly' intertextual kind. This in turn marks the beginning of an attempt to think about the role that inference plays in the process by which utterances are classified and interpreted in terms of their differential relation to others - which must be a fundamental constituent of any intertextual theory of interpretation. There is, needless to say, much more to be said, and I will revisit these issues in chapters ~~four~~ Five and ~~five~~ Six, where I will also consider the role of inference in classifying and interpreting intertextual relations which are centrally organised by similarity.

Text, context and intertextuality

Intertextuality, in redefining both text and its contexts of production and reception, has blurred their boundaries, making it increasingly difficult to identify the singularity that

is read as theoretical concept or/and empirical object. The textualisation of context, perhaps most currently visible within new historicism, and the textualisation of the reading subject, as a 'site' of textual knowledges and their transformation, are, as I have said before, valuable and theoretically productive, but they have led to an impasse in accounts of interpretation as intertextual. This is nowhere more acute than in 'new' audience studies, because it is here that the practices of actual readers (or more usually viewers or 'users') are a central preoccupation. The problem might best be summarised in a question: Is it possible to distinguish between text and context? (And should we even want to?). In the words of Lawrence Grossberg,

> Not only is every media event mediated by other texts, but it's almost impossible to know what constitutes the bounded text which might be interpreted or which is actually consumed.[18]

David Morley cites Grossberg's position as one instance of 'this new emphasis on intertextuality' but conceives it as 'running several risks, notably that contextual issues will overwhelm and overdetermine texts and their specificity', arriving at a point where text - as concept - is 'dissolved into its readings'.[19] What he is objecting to here is not the importance of contextual issues per se - after all most of his work insists on their centrality - but the threat posed by a particular set of contextual issues: those raised by intertextuality.[20] Intertextuality is a certain type of context, but not, it seems, unproblematically the 'right' kind. Yet in the same chapter, he correctly challenges Fiske's formulation of 'the social' (understood as the contexts of reception) as a site of flux and diversity, insisting on the fact that the social positioning of viewers regulates their access to cultural codes.[21] What is interesting is that Morley does not seem to think that what he is proposing is an intertextual approach. In his discourse, 'intertextuality' comes to signify an <u>excess</u> of polysemy, an uncritical concept which seemingly abandons any theoretical interest in explaining the processes by which discourses or ideologies delimit the possibilities of meaning , and which in turn asserts the autonomy of both textuality and the reader, apparently cut loose from social relations.[22]

Whilst correctly identifying some of the difficulties produced by Grossberg's position, Morley immediately concludes that intertextuality <u>necessarily</u> erodes the theoretical possibility of specifying the text that is 'read' or consumed. What he does not seem to recognise is that Grossberg's formulation of intertextuality transposes an abstract definition - intertextuality as the ontological condition of text and textuality - to the plane of the concrete - the particular text and the (particular) reader's interpretation. Therefore, there is no possibility of recognising and seeking to account for the differences (or contradictions) that might obtain between the ontological condition of

text as intertextuality, the reading process, and the reader's encounter with a particular text. Further, Grossberg seems to ignore or elide a central element in Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva: the fact that the permutation that is text is always an effect (as well as an instance) of a social struggle between languages, a conflict which necessarily involves the attempt to delimit meaning. This has significant implications for thinking about text-context relations from the perspective of interpretation. Just as the processes of textual production must always involve the attempt to fix meaning, so the processes of textual interpretation have to be thought of in terms which take account of a cognate process. It should go without saying that fixing is, of course, never secured or definitive - which clearly also follows from Bakhtin and Kristeva; but it does need to be said, because there is a danger of a misreading here. The attempt to fix meaning is a constitutive part of signification but this should not be conflated with the bogies of textual determinism and the spectre of a suitably 'retro' glass syringe and needle. We need to think about texts and contexts (understood here as the textual or discursive knowledges of readers) as setting limits to the interpretative process, not simply as conditions for unrestricted semiosis.

In the same chapter and in a similar spirit, Morley warns against the dangers of fetishising context, again suggesting the dangers of an undisciplined excess, and approvingly citing John Corner: 'What do you include in context and where do you stop?'[23] Corner's 'Meaning, Genre and Context: The Problematics of Public Knowledge in the New Audience Studies,' as the title suggests, identifies context as one of three concepts which require substantial redefinition if television's role in the production of public knowledge is to be pursued successfully. Interestingly, Corner invokes pragmatics, not exactly as a model - there is no detailed discussion here of pragmatic definitions of context - but as a potentially valuable informing parallel.

> The aim [in pragmatics] has been to analyse meaning (across all 'levels', though as I have pointed out this is not usually made explicit) as socially situated.[24]

Corner's 'development' of this into a two-part definition of context, 'the social relations of viewing' - the structures and processes which bear on the 'sociality' of interpretative action - and the 'space-time setting of viewing' - the processes which embed tv in other practices of the everyday - might come as something of a surprise to a classical pragmatician, apart perhaps from the echo of deixis.[25] But Corner is right to propose pragmatics as a model for theorising the constitutive dimensions of context.[26]

In the tradition of strong pragmatics I have been considering, the concept of context is fundamental to a theoretical account of how any utterance means. However this does not make context the sole determinant of interpretation. Relevance exemplifies this

point, insisting at one and the same time on the centrality of inferencing - and therefore hearer knowledge - to any act of interpretation; and, arguing for the central role of a Chomskyan linguistic form within interpretative processing. Further, strong inferential accounts focus a particular set of issues about text-context relations. If all utterances are to be understood, broadly speaking, as evidence from which hearers derive 'conclusions' (interpretations), then what needs to be specified are the processes by which such conclusions are derived (how and why certain kinds of knowledges - or contexts - are mobilised and made use of in the interpretative process and others are not), why certain interpretations and not others are produced, and why the interpretative process 'stops' - given the multiplicity of inferences that can be derived from any utterance (the last is central to Relevance).

> We have suggested that the context used to process new assumptions is, essentially, a subset of the individual's old assumptions, with which the new assumptions combine to yield a variety of contextual effects ... However we still have to face the serious problem of how the context is determined: how some particular subset of the individual's assumptions is selected.[27]

Context cannot be equated with the full extent of the reader's knowledge, it is what is selected and deployed in the interpretative act. As discussed in chapter two, Sperber and Wilson's account of the process of context selection breaks with pragmatic orthodoxy, which frequently defines context as given and often also determined in advance, already 'present in the hearer's mind at the start of the act of utterance'[28] Their counter-proposal is a dynamic definition of context formation, understood as process which is 'open to choices and revisions throughout the comprehension process'.[29] The interpretation of contestational utterances of the type discussed above is a clear instance of this dynamic aspect of context: the implicature which makes possible the classification of the utterance as a contestation is a context which is precisely not pre-given and fixed prior to the interpretative process, but constructed during it.

Sperber and Wilson's account of context incorporates further important insights about how text-context relations are constituted and reconstituted in the interpretative process. I will outline these briefly here but their implications will be discussed in subsequent chapters. At the most general level, Relevance provides an account of how text can and does 'become' context via the interpretative processes of explicature and implicature. Yet this does not provoke the 'crisis' represented in very different moods by Grossberg and Morley. In Relevance, the two remain distinguishable, just as text remains distinct from its interpretation, precisely because of the focus on the interpretative process which organises their relations. Second, Sperber and Wilson

draw attention to the status of the knowledge that hearers select and deploy in interpretation: the relative 'strength' or 'weakness' with which assumptions are held by the hearer. Utterances may strengthen or weaken, to the extent of contradicting and cancelling, certain contextually accessible assumptions. This must be of central importance to theorising intertextual interpretation. It opens up a way of thinking more precisely about the role of the subject's relation to knowledge within the interpretative process. And it is also suggestive for thinking about the relations between contexts within specific acts of reading. For example, a plurality of markers of a particular genre can make possible not only the selection of various assumptions such as 'this is a romance' and so forth but, because of their 'density', strengthen that context. A genre shift can act both to mobilise another context and also weaken the previous set of assumptions - an issue to which I will return in the next chapter.

Third, Sperber and Wilson are specifically interested in the differential 'accessibility' of contexts within a given situation of utterance. Their formulation of accessibility is, of course, formulated in terms of Relevance: the greater the number of 'steps' required to access a context, the greater the effort required, so extra processing must be offset by contextual effects. But even if we bracket their formula, 'accessibility', though the term is 'infelicitous', has a general salience for any attempt to theorise interpretation as intertextual.[30] If we equate the totality of a reader's textual knowledge with context, we are indeed faced with the question of the text 'unbound'; but if instead, we insist on the need to hierarchise a reader's knowledges in terms of which are most, more, quite, less likely to become contexts within a particular situation of reading, we are freed from this unproductive impasse as well as being able to specify contingency as a gradient rather than a single term opposed to an illusory necessity.

Related to this is the argument that 'the same context can be accessed in different ways'.[31] An account of these different ways is not a central interest for Sperber and Wilson, given that maximal relevance involves selecting the context which makes possible the best 'balance of effort against effect'.[32] But it is pertinent for anyone who is interested in comparing and contrasting the interpretations of different readers. Therefore, for example, the interpretations of different readers may converge even though the particular pattern or route of the interpretative procedure may vary. A particular context may be accessed from various other contexts which are either present at the outset (the initial context), or are extended or constructed during the interpretative process.

Inferential accounts of meaning not only expose the limits and problems in intertextual accounts of interpretations, they also have an explanatory potential. Relevance in particular (though this is also true of Kinstch's work on text

comprehension) is above all committed to the specification of interpretative processes (including their difference from production processes). At the same time inferential theories open up a number of ways of thinking about intertextual interpretation as in some significant part an inferential process.

3. Intertextuality reads inference

Whilst a pragmatician might conceive points of resemblance between intertextual and pragmatic theories, even though such congruences might well dissolve on closer scrutiny, it is difficult to imagine a cognate experience for the 'intertextualist' encountering inferential theories and particularly Relevance. The proposing of inference as an interpretative process, bringing with it the spectre of a logical model of natural languages, the absence of textuality as a fundamental explanatory concept,[33] and the fundamental commitment to understanding interpretation as a process of resolution, are the most obvious markers of an alien discourse; a discourse immune to some of the central tenets of post-structural linguistics and epistemology (including theories of subjectivity), and where intention is not re-asserted but simply assumed. More specifically, the lexicon of Relevance, where utterances are 'stimuli', human beings are 'efficient information processing devices', and situations are 'environments' for cognitive processes, is not only easily identified as highly problematic, but also easily dismissed as tendentious. In the critique of intertextual theories, I have tried to show what inferential theories have to offer intertextuality, but a focalisation of inferential accounts by intertextual ones suggests not only differences but fundamental problems. These are first, the challenges that intertextual theories pose to the conditions of communication that inferential theories more or less strongly propose, namely the semantic indeterminacy of utterance and the vagaries of context (to be considered in the first two sections of the critique). In the third section I will consider the problems that intertextual accounts raise for the principle which is presumed to guide and govern the interpretative process under such conditions. My argument, most briefly, is this. Intertextual theories of meaning propose a much more plausible account of the conditions of 'communication', one that is incompatible with inferential accounts, particularly ~~in its~~ Relevance and Gricean versions: intertextual accounts offer an account of how texts and contexts are constrained in ways in which Relevance, most specifically, does not consider. This requires a rethinking of the character and constitutive role of the various principles which inferential theories claim shape interpretation. These principles do not do the explanatory work that is claimed for them and frequently, above all with Relevance, they function as a substitute for the constitutive role of social relations in interpretation. As in chapter two, I will be

focusing primarily here on Relevance Theory, but I will draw out the implications of intertextuality for other inferential approaches (considered here in the same contrastive spirit as chapter two) so as to highlight some of the general problems in inferential approaches, as well as addressing the discursive particularities of Relevance. This will call for a return to some of the extant criticisms of inferential theories considered in chapter two.

Deregulated Meaning and the textual 'remainder'

For Sperber and Wilson, the linguistic utterance is radically semantically indeterminate. The linguistic form of an utterance can produce a number of coded semantic representations, which correspond to the possible senses of the utterance. This view is not at variance with pragmatic common sense. Where Sperber and Wilson differ is in prising form and sense much further apart. The semantic representations derivable from the linguistic form are incomplete representations of propositional forms which need to be completed in order to function as explicatures or as premises from which implicatures can be derived. Further, the utterance is not even a reproduction of a speaker's thought, but a public representation and interpretation of it. The radical semantic indeterminacy of utterance is one of the two conditions of communication which Relevance assumes. But are utterances really like this?

One of the more entertaining examples in *Relevance* aims to describe what an exclusively code-based model of communication would look like. It takes the form of an anecdote about the Stalin era. Two friends in the West are arguing about the Soviet Union. Paul sees it as 'a land of justice and freedom' and plans to emigrate. He will write back to his friend, Henry and tell him 'the beautiful truth'. Henry tell him he is wrong - 'there was oppression and misery in Russia', his letters will be censored anyway - and tries to persuade him not to go.

> Since Paul would not be moved, Henry persuaded him at accept at least the following convention: if Paul wrote back in black ink, Henry would know he was sincere. If he wrote in purple ink, Henry would understand that Paul was not free to report the truth. Six months after Paul's departure, Henry received the following letter, written in black ink: 'Dear Henry, this is the country of justice and freedom. It is a worker's paradise. In the shops you can find everything you need, with the sole exception of purple ink ...'
>
> The point is that when a code is used in human communication, what makes a communicated assumption manifest to the addressee is the communicator's manifest intention to make it manifest. There is no way a communicator could bind herself by a code or a convention to such an extent that it would be impossible for her not to have the intention her signal represents.[134]

Paul and Henry try to formulate a code, most simply stated: black ink means that Russia is good, purple ink means that Russia is bad. Purple and black ink have the senses they do only because of the explicit agreement of two speaker-hearers. For Sperber and Wilson, the point of the example is that the two friends manage to communicate without a code. Here a code is something which must be agreed, and a constraint on communication.[35] Paul frees himself from the bind of the code and therefore manages to communicate his intention. This concept of a code as contract and cipher is easy to criticise. Sperber and Wilson are right; of course communication does not work in this way. But there are other ways of conceiving coded meaning which they do not consider. Whilst it is possible to account for Henry's correct interpretation in terms of inference and intention, it is also possible to see that the code - purple equals bad - is still functioning, though the signifier - purple ink - is now lexicalised (the phrase 'purple ink') as opposed to being the colour of the ink in which letter is written. Intertextual theories offer a way of understanding how signifying practices can stabilise meanings which do not rely on identity or repetition. Indeed, variation needs to be understood as one reason for stability. The purple ink is a case in point. The code is not abandoned, it is varied, but the meaning of that variation is constituted by its relation to another code.

Grice's formulates convention in similarly antipathetic terms: an aversion to the 'un-useful' constraints that convention may effect on communication. He succinctly encapsulates his attitude to convention in 'Meaning Revisited': 'I do not think that meaning is essentially connected with convention. What it is essentially connected with is fixing what sentences mean: convention is indeed one of these ways but it is not the only way'.[36] Conventional meanings are, as it were, available for use but they may equally well be disregarded in favour of alternative non-conventional choices. And this is supported by Grice's 'anti-authoritarian' formulation of language use and utterance meaning. The speaker who uses 'on the other hand' to connect two non-contrastive statements is not banished to meaningless land; his statement, Grice argues, is still truth-conditionally valid.[37] This is clearly in 'some sense' true. But how does it help explain how a putative hearer might interpret it? His own representation of a 'baffled' hearer's response - along the lines of 'what do you mean by "on the other hand"' - in fact describes a moment of communicative breakdown which is not resolved by establishing the validity of the utterance.[38] Grice and Sperber and Wilson are pledged to the idea that conventions or codes can hinder 'successful' communication. This involves a view of codes and conventions as either contractual or consensual, but more importantly as not binding. 'Opting-out' is a possibility. But codes and conventions are not in this sense a matter of individual choice. There are very important ways in which signifying practices 'choose' us - an issue to which I will return. Grice's

example of a speaker who has an idiosyncratic sense of 'on the other hand' also draws attention to the model of language which informs his theory and which is shared with Sperber and Wilson: a model which formulates communication in terms of only two explanatory categories: a language (conceived as a code or a set of conventions which accord with majority usage) and its individual users. There is nothing 'else', nothing, so to speak, 'in between'. This raises fundamental problems. The concept of language employed (whether as code - Relevance - or as conventional use - Grice) assumes a national language which when subjected to a Bakhtinian critique must be reformulated as a heteroglossia - there is no single system or set of agreed uses, only multiple and conflicting modes of signification. Second such a critique itself draws attention to a recurring feature in the work of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva: a Marxist interest in the ideologies that underwrite linguistic concepts and models.[39] Voloshinov's critiques of 'individualist-subjectivism' and 'abstract-objectivism', Bakhtin's critique of unitary language and its ideological force, Kristeva's account of symbol and sign, all evidence an interest in linguistics as ideological. Grice and Sperber and Wilson's categories of language and its users, therefore calls for an analysis of the ideologies which underpin their models and also of what is ejected and resisted - the question of textual form. Third any account of interpretation which operates with only these two categories cannot see anything else playing a constitutive role in meaning making. There is no place for genre, register, and other kinds of 'code', understood as textual practices which shape utterance meaning and the interpretative process, even down to its smallest units. The multi-accentual sign challenges the pragmatic conception of the utterance by insisting on its textuality, not only, or even most importantly its linguistic form, which is itself to be significantly explicated in terms of the textual. But the intertextual theories of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva articulate textual practices - such as genre - in a distinctive way: not as formal patternings but as substantive, and above all social and cultural ones which inscribe relations to knowledge for both speakers and hearers, writers and readers. This distinctive understanding of the textual creates fundamental problems for inferential theories as will be shown below.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Relevance and Grice's work on implicatures and non-natural meaning is a marked indifference to the role of textual form in the making of meaning. Such a claim clearly requires both clarification and substantiation. What, after all, is Grice's maxim of manner but an attempt to formulate the possible role of 'how' (form) rather than 'what' (content) in the production and interpretation of implicatures? Is not Sperber and Wilson's extended treatment of 'style' strong evidence of the same interest in the forms of meaning? The answer must certainly be yes; but when such concerns are viewed through the lens of

intertextual theories, the limits of the 'how' of meaning in inferential accounts - and indeed the very formulation of the 'how' in Gricean pragmatics - become starkly apparent. Paul's letter is a case in point. Another code or 'language' in Bakhtin's sense is at work here. A defensive pro-Soviet discourse is being parodied here: 'country of justice and freedom', 'workers' paradise', no there aren't queues around the block for GUM, and so on. The parodic representation inscribed in the excess of markers of this language, and heightened because it departs from the expected conventions of 'letter to a friend', functions to delimit further the fact that Henry was right. This raises a more general question about the disavowal of the textual in pragmatics, evidenced most clearly in its use of examples. Certain types of linguistic example, constructed for the purpose of teaching a language, may background sense in order to foreground a grammatical rule.[40] In pragmatics, the possible interpretations of the example utterance(s) and the means by which a particular interpretation is achieved are obviously strongly foregrounded. Consequently, examples in pragmatics are frequently constructed to produce a number of possible senses which usually correspond to differences within the situation of utterance. Perhaps the most obvious feature of pragmatic examples is their length. Examples are almost always either single utterances (Peter's bat is too grey) or adjacency pairs or triads (A: Would you like coffee? B: Coffee would keep me awake). There is an obvious rationale for this: short examples can be explicated more fully. But this tends to privilege local interpretation - the senses of individual lexemes within a sentence, and an account of the co-text as one or, at the most, a few of the sentences preceding or following. This is clearly liable to make genre and other codes less visible to pragmatic analysis. But not always, as this example from *Relevance* unwittingly attests:

(a) Peter: Is Jack a good sailor?
(b) Mary: Yes, he is.
(c) Mary: ALL the English are good sailors.
(d) Mary: He's English.[41]

Sperber and Wilson discuss this as an illustration of the way in which the speaker can guide the hearer's search for Relevance and they compare the contextual effects which are produced in each case. But what is revealing is that the noun phrase 'a good sailor' is never considered potentially ambiguous in the account that follows, which is surprising given the general pragmatic attention to ambiguity and its frequent deliberate use in pragmatic examples. The phrase has the potential to mean not only 'good at sailing', the sense which is recognised in the example, but also 'someone who does not suffer from seasickness'. Why is the ambiguity of the phrase not recognised? This

is not a case of simple oversight: a code is operating which cancels or backgrounds the ambiguity. This code corresponds neither to the under-determining system which is their definition of a (national) language, nor to their formulation of coded communication as something which must be explicitly agreed upon in order to work (as discussed in the purple ink example above); but it is a code nevertheless. Most simply, this code can described as a set of possibilities which conjoin nationalities with particular skills or attributes, positive or negative: Scots are good lawyers and engineers; Americans have no sense of irony; Italians are sentimental; and so on. Within the framework of this code, the seasickness sense of 'good sailor' is cancelled: it is not an adequately strong attribute of either a positive or negative kind. But there is a second significant intertextual marker which constrains the possibilities of interpretation. The name 'Jack', when conjoined with a predicate relating to sailing, mobilises 'Jolly Jack Tar', a figure who personifies English seafaring excellence, and therefore makes the possibility of a 'doesn't get seasick' interpretation much less likely.

This refusal to engage with the role of the textual in the making and fixing of meaning is not, of course, a necessity of theories which are committed to the interpretative importance of inference. Kintsch's theory of discourse comprehension as a 'construction-integration' modelling process ordered by constraint satisfaction offers a useful contrast:

> In all probability, genre-specific strategies exist to guide such search processes. In a story one would look for causal links. In a legal argument, one routinely looks for contradictions.[42]

Kintsch is talking here about the ways in which information is retrieved and generated through, broadly inferential procedures.[43] But he does not develop this argument, which seems like an opportunity or insight wasted, given the focus of discourse-comprehension on 'beyond the sentence' units of text. There is surely a 'Kintschian' way of understanding generic knowledge as one of the ways in which predicate-argument structures are 'filled in' during the comprehension process to capture 'pragmatic, rhetorical, stylistic, cognitive and interactional properties'.[44] Kintsch notes these properties but they are not part of the representational structure he proposes. More pertinent here however, is that his understanding of genre is simplistic and, in some ways, confused. Narratives, or 'stories' as he refers to them, are not a genre as he proposes but a mode. Further, he seems to assume a one-to-one relation between text and genre which is fundamentally incompatible with intertextual theories.[45] And whilst Kintsch, unlike Grice or Sperber and Wilson, acknowledges a determinant of meaning which exists neither in 'the' language nor the speaker, it is difficult to imagine

how his model could capture the difference and variation within textual relations that intertextual theories predict.[46]

The ways in which textuality both produces and fixes meaning are not simply ignored by Grice and Sperber and Wilson, they are disavowed. Grice's maxim of manner is the marker of this within his theory, the place where the how of meaning is confined and permitted to have an effect.[47] Relevance does not make the same mistake; 'style' is a natural property of all utterance, which 'arises ... in the pursuit of relevance'.[48] The disavowal of the textual in Relevance lies elsewhere - in their account of utterance resemblance. One of Sperber and Wilson's interests in language is the ways in which utterances can be used to represent other utterances which they resemble - one use of the meta-representational potential of language.[49] Resemblance may take various forms: a shared linguistic structure that includes a semantic structure (the instance given is direct speech or quotation); a shared propositional form ('classic' instances of indirect speech with tense and pronominal shifts); or more loosely, some degree of resemblance between propositional forms (sharing logical properties, for example, or having 'partly identical contextual implications in some contexts'; the instance given is summary).[50] Despite arguing that the role of such resemblances in 'verbal communication is grossly underestimated' by 'theorists', what is interesting here are the limits set on resemblance.[51] These are of three kinds. First and most predictably, there is no place for textual resemblances, most importantly those produced by genre or register. The sentence is the largest semantic unit understood to play a role in interpretation. Yet Voloshinov and Bakhtin's concept of the multiaccentual sign inscribes genre and register within the single sentence itself as central to the making of meaning; and resemblance must take account of its textual dimension. Second, Relevance treats the interpretation of resemblance between utterances, conceived in what is already a limited way, as a particular type of communication. By contrast what intertextual theories insist on is that the production and interpretation of meaning is always shaped by (textual) relations of resemblance; utterances are always echoic. What is treated by Sperber and Wilson as a specific if important instance of communication is the condition of all meaning (in the expanded terms that intertextuality demands). Third, resemblance demands consideration of the role of difference: interpretation understood in intertextual terms must involve the identification or/and construction of differences between utterances as well as similarities. For Sperber and Wilson, difference is implicit in their characterisation of various types of resemblance (bar the limiting case of identity), but they do not consider how it is interpreted.[52] Relevance can of course handle certain relations of difference, most pertinently here the relations of contradiction that might obtain between two or more utterances. The interest of the Bakhtin example is that it cannot be

explained by an appeal to logical relations. The interpretation does not rely on the recognition of contradiction but the hearer identifying or constructing it as controversial.

The vagaries of context

In my critique of intertextual approaches, I drew attention to the precision and rigour which characterises the Relevance account of context, in terms of theorising the processes by which knowledge is mobilised, deployed and produced. Nevertheless, intertextual theories expose a fundamental problem with the way that Relevance conceptualises context. This can be seen most clearly through a consideration of the two modalities on which the concept of context depends: the speaker and her knowledge. Sperber and Wilson's formulation of these concepts and their relations is individualist. Just as their refusal to see the textual marks a resistance to the constitutive sociality of language, so their understanding of context and its modalities is shaped by the same liberal discourse. It is a discourse shared with much pragmatic thinking, but as in so many things Relevance goes one further. Their challenge to Grice's Cooperative Principle is the function of the more radical individualism they espouse.

> For us, the only purpose that a genuine communicator and a willing audience necessarily have in common is to achieve successful communication: that is to have the communicator's informative intention recognised by the audience. Grice assumes that communication must have 'a common purpose of set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction' ... over and above the aim of achieving successful communication'.[53]

Communication is achieved in Relevance through what is formulated as a co-incidence of self-interest: the speaker wishes to communicate, the hearer wants to recognise her communicative intention. There are no overarching goals - rational or/and moral - which structure communication. By making communication a subset of cognition, Sperber and Wilson seek to innoculate it against the danger of having some supra-individual social sense. But Grice's principle and their critique and reformulation both belong to the same master-discourse.

It is not that humans have no social goals or motivations in relations to others. Sperber's recent writing on the evolution of cognitive capacities makes influencing and persuading others central to human cognitive development.[54] It is that the human just happens to coincide with a fundamentally individualist concept of the subject. Sperber's human, like Relevance-person, always precedes and can be distinguished from social relations where the social is only ever an aggregation of individual behaviours. Sperber's choice of 'influence' is instructive here, and recalls one of the common banalisations of intertextuality, as 'influence', which marks a resistance to

meaning conceived as irreducibly social. In contrast to Sperber and Wilson, the intertextual theories of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva formulate the subject, including her/his cultural practices as constitutively social.[55] We are, in every way, shaped by our relations with others, whether these others take the form of other subjects, or our relations with institutions, technologies (including those of reading and writing), cultural practices and so on which are only so many abstracted forms of social relations. Further, intertextuality inscribes an idea of social relations as fundamentally and structurally conflictual, making the a-priori individual and the aggregate social even less tenable. Utterance is indeed fundamentally suasive, but the tensions and conflict suggested by this cannot be understood in terms of a theory of individual relations which assume that power and authority are modifications of a prior state of theoretical affairs from which they are absent. Power and authority are always-already in process when we produce and interpret utterance, and subjects speak from different and unequal places, with different relations to knowledge and authority.

The individualist character of Relevance-person is fundamental to the way in which knowledge (as the sum of possible contexts at a given moment) is theorised. Inferential theories are naturally predisposed to assume that knowledge is significantly shared by speaker-hearers. Given the infinity of conclusions that can be derived from the same premises, one move is a strong positing of the knowledges which speakers use in inference as shared or even 'mutual'. This is Grice's position (though it is never stated explicitly), but for Sperber and Wilson this option is not available. Their dispatch of the mutual knowledge hypothesis as infinite regress and their insistence on the idiosyncracy of individual knowledge are clear evidence of this. But not only is the tenet of 'idiosyncracy' fundamentally flawed, it is not even adhered to within their own accounts of interpretation. Whilst Sperber and Wilson are willing to acknowledge that '[m]embers of the same cultural group share a number of experiences, teachings and views', this is only a 'common framework' beyond which

> individuals tend to be highly idiosyncratic. Differences in life history lead to differences in memorised information ...Whilst grammars neutralise the differences between dissimilar experiences, cognition and memory superimpose differences even on common experience.[56]

Differences in knowledge amongst individuals far outweigh what is shared. And it is the differences which Relevance thinks it must tackle in order to explain successful communication. But is the knowledge of individuals really so idiosyncratic, so unpredictable? Sperber and Wilson glimpse something important about subject knowledge. There are indeed profound differences in the knowledges that speaker-hearers have, differences which cannot be ignored. Their error is to explain difference

in terms of the individual, indeed as a property or attribute of the individual: idiosyncracy. What is shared is cultural, what is not is not (though of course it may become so).

'Idiosyncracy' is, of course, the concept that is supposed to keep culture and the social from making too much of a difference. Idiosyncracy is 'proved' by resorting to the stock example of the car-crash, interpreted differently by different spectators, even down to 'basic facts'.[57] Their conclusion: (even) the same event can be perceived differently by different subjects. The reason: differences in 'life-history'. What is lacking here is any conception of social relations which can explain how different subjects can conceive and construct the same object radically differently but also how different subjects can conceive and construct an object in identical or near-identical ways. Within intertextual theories, the constitutive sociality of subjects does not preclude complexity of social and cultural identity; rather the concept of culture as competing sets of signifying practices opens up the possibility of registering and examining that complexity in a highly nuanced way. But this complexity cannot be reduced to idiosyncracy: the unpredictable effects of 'differences in life history'. In Sperber and Wilson's formulation, there is no sense here of the difference that is constituted by 'a' culture, and indeed no sense here of what a culture is - a 'national' culture, a religion, a club, a school? - nor, and this is what intertextual theories especially demand, any glimpse of the constitutive relations between the cultural practices which together constitute the General Culture. Sperber's recent anthropological work on belief and metarepresentation can be understood as going some way to addressing the bland homogeneity that such a definition of cultural relations implies: 'members' of a culture may have different strengths of belief, distance and ambivalence to certain beliefs within the culture may be entertained and, more importantly from Sperber's point of view, represented.[58] But this variation or development never departs from the presupposition that the cultural is only what is shared.[59] This is not to say that Sperber's current thinking could not handle the idea of a culture as having an exclusional function. But what is missing is the acknowledgement that contestation is a constituent of culture, that culture is always dialogic and that it produces difference as well as producing or attempting to produce commonality. Sperber and Wilson's choice of 'grammar' in their formulation of idiosyncracy is also problematic. Once again, it seems, codes are understood as attempting to exert a negative if necessary limitation on individuality, 'neutralising' difference. But intertextual theories precisely deny this neutralising function. Codes or signifying practices articulate and inscribe difference; but intertextual difference is social and cultural not merely idiosyncratic.

Nor is Relevance consistent in its treatment of individuals as predominantly idiosyncratic. Above I drew attention to the unacknowledged codes which delimit the interpretative possibilities of Sperber and Wilson's examples. What is important now is that their examples predominantly correspond to a particular set of genres which minimise the possibilities of knowledge-differentials and variations between speaker-hearers: casual conversation between subjects who know each other well in recreational situations: a couple at a party, a picnic, a walk in the country and so on. One of the important consequences of this pervasive speaker-hearer intimacy is that the social and cultural force of the knowledges which need to be mobilised in interpretation is nearly wholly banalised. A speaker simply knows that the hearer knows what osso bucco is (this is a real example) and can make a pretty reasonable guess that s/he has read *Sense and Sensibility* (so is this). The interpretative impact of socially and culturally specific knowledges is therefore virtually invisible in accounts of interpretative process, reduced as it is to the 'accident' of intimacy. The situations of utterance - mainly private and recreational - are assumed to represent voluntary relationships between speaker-hearers, but also function as a synecdoche for the totality of speaker-hearer-relations. This enables a bypassing of any question of power or authority. When power intrudes into Relevance, it is both benign and trivial. The driver who says to the traffic warden '[p]retend you haven't seen me' and the teacher who does not want to use Peter's bat in a biology experiment are cases in point.[60] The legal authority of the traffic warden is not to be taken seriously, as the driver's utterance makes clear. The example could hardly work if the driver were a burglar. The example assumes a reader who shares a very specific notion of what 'really' constitutes a crime. The rejection of Peter's bat is also benign; surely he too will benefit from the results of the experiment, even if his bat is too grey to be used. However these are exceptions as examples. Usually speaking subjects are assumed, by virtue of the situation of utterance, to be equals.

What is also interesting is that the speaking subjects, situations, utterances and the knowledges upon which they depend are highly specific. 'Peter' and 'Mary' are, of course, only names which function to distinguish utterances but it is interesting to conjoin the various pieces of information that we are offered about 'them'. Mary is a lawyer, Peter is a surgeon. Both of them cook; they enjoy Italian food and have a 'favourite' Italian restaurant. They take walks in the country, holiday in rural France and can 'get by' in French. They read Jane Austen and are familiar with the Romantic valorisation of nature. Peter and Mary are not 'everyperson' any more than the situations of the examples can be construed as a neutral 'everyday'. They are bourgeois subjects whose cultural knowledges and values are explicitly English, and, again, in a class specific sense, European - France and Italy are values, as is the inn (as opposed to the package holiday). The issue here is not about equal opportunities in linguistic

examples, it is that social specificity is naturalised, and the knowledges and codes of a particular class-fraction are displaced as determinants of interpretation through a process which naturalises similarity.[61] Jack's sailing prowess is a case in point. It is knowledge of sailing - presumably as a leisure pastime - which is mobilised backgrounding the admittedly less literal sense of 'good sailor' which is accessed from knowledge about being a passenger. Idiosyncracy can hardly be said to obtain in examples which assume socially specific knowledges which function to delimit interpretative possibilities.

Relevance and resolution

In the previous sections, I have shown how the conditions of communication that inferential theories seek to explain are themselves fundamentally flawed. Texts and contexts delimit and constrain interpretative possibilities in very different ways and to a far greater extent than such theories allow. Consequently, a re-assessment of the principle or process which is assumed to govern 'successful' communication under such conditions is called for. Most simply, the principle in question does not do the explanatory work that is claimed. This is particularly 'relevant' to Relevance, given that it is here that the indeterminacy of language and the 'idiosyncracy' of speaker-hearer knowledges are most strongly articulated, with the concomitant effect that relevance - as principle - must do a greater amount of explanatory work. But relevance itself, as the principle which orders communication (and cognition), also has autonomous problems. It is these which I wish to consider here. Whilst Grice finds an underlying order in communication by way of the Cooperative Principle, Relevance does not. The 'disorder' and semantic instability which characterise utterances and the unpredictability ('idiosyncracy') of subject knowledge is real: the conditions of communication are just this 'messy'. In Relevance, order is situated somewhere else, in the cognitive processes of the subject. As I mentioned in chapter two, various commentators have remarked on and challenged the ultra-rationalism of Relevance-person, but the question needs to be framed here through the lens of intertextual theories which raise two problems for the principle of Relevance and the psychology in which it is embedded.[62] The first relates to the subject's relations to knowledge; the second to the goal of interpretative resolution, to which Relevance is committed, and which it shares with much of pragmatics.

Relevance theory conceives the subject's relations to knowledge in two ways. First, as a relation of augmentation; 'human cognition is aimed at improving the individual's knowledge of the world', the adding of more, more accurate information that is more easily retrievable.[63] Second, in terms of the relations between the knowledges that any individual has: assumptions are tested for their consistency with

others of related content. Sperber and Wilson's emphasis on the relative strength with which we entertain assumptions, as well as their account of the processes of strengthening and weakening which may take place during cognition (or communication) presupposes such consistency-testing, which is itself consistent with their rational model of how subjects know. Within such a model, the processing of contradiction clearly requires explanation, but Relevance can only understand this in the perspective of resolution (even though that resolution is always subject to the possibility of revision). Intertextual theories suggest a very different model of knowledge relations deriving from the social theory that underwrites them.[64] First, subjects do not always seek to ameliorate their knowledge of the world. As social and, Kristeva's distinctive contributions, psychic subjects, we may and do resist knowledge in a multiplicity of ways, including knowledge which conflicts with or contradict what we know. Second, we hold all kinds of assumptions which conflict with or contradict one another, sometimes simultaneously and consciously. To take a very simple example, when I look at the pictures of models in fashion magazines, it strengthens my (already very strong) assumptions that the hyperbolic valuation of a certain kind of body is oppressive to women, that it is psychologically damaging, inconducive to happiness and so on. But at the same time, I also 'know', almost equally strongly, that I, as a woman, would probably be happier if I was thinner (and richer). The crucial point is I hold both of these sets of contradictory assumptions at the same time and there is no resolution (no strengthening of one or weakening of the other) of this at the present time. Sperber's formulation of an irrational belief as a 'semi-propositional representation' which 'corresponds to a half-understood idea' does not really help here.[65] Are either or both of these beliefs half-understood? Sperber's formulation is also flawed in a more important sense. By treating 'irrational' beliefs as 'semi-propositional representations', he ensures that they cannot enter in a process of consistency-testing. For whilst 'a plausible necessary condition for rationally holding a factual belief is that it should have been matched and found consistent with all beliefs of closely related content', an irrational belief, because of its semi-propositional form, cannot enter this process.[66] The problem here is produced by an elision of two categories: the half-understood and the irrational. An irrational belief is one that is not consistent with other related beliefs the subject might hold, but Sperber assumes that this must mean that it is not fully understood. Whilst Sperber is eager to avoid some of the minefields of the topos - associating irrational beliefs with primitive cultures for example - and insists on their cognitive value for creative thinking and so on - he fails to understand, as does Relevance, that contradictory assumptions and beliefs can be simultaneously held and fully understood.[67]

One of the most important reasons for this is that knowledge is discursive, that any assumption (or better, 'statement'), is in an important sense always-already ordered in terms of its relations with other statements; it is always part of a discourse.[68] The relations between assumptions/statements cannot be reduced to a consistency-testing operation in the service of knowledge-improvement; nor can 'discourse' be adequately captured by understanding assumption relations as significantly organised in terms of likely or stereotypical co-occurrence (scripts, frames, schemas and so on), because such theories do not take account of the ways in which knowledge is textually inscribed - an issue to which I will return in later chapters. Here, what is important are the boundaries between discourses, the rules by which statements are included or excluded, that is we are not talking about a single set of logical rules which order the relations between all knowledge, but the various rules which order the series of statements that comprise particular discourses. Within such a framework there is no reason why subjects should not entertain assumptions which are 'content' related but which conflict or contradict with one another without resolution.

There is another sense of resolution to which Relevance is committed: the idea, common in pragmatics, that interpretation is an 'act' of resolution, and the interpretative process as one which resolves ambiguity. Relevance, as a strong inferential theory, is necessarily pledged to explaining why interpretation 'stops' and the principle of Relevance is precisely an attempt to do this: relative (rather than absolute) cognitive gains which are efficient in terms of effort expended. I have already suggested that text and context constrain or delimit interpretation and the interpretative process, but there is a further related constraint that Relevance theory ignores, the way reading practices constrain interpretation. This fundamental oversight emerges in their account of poetic effects:

> Let us give the name poetic effect to the peculiar effect of an utterance which achieves most of its relevance through a wide array of weak implicatures. Generally, the most striking examples of a particular figure, the ones singled out for attention by rhetoricians and students of style, are those which have poetic effects in this sense.[69]

Figures can be identified in terms of the number of weak implicatures they generate, but, they go on to argue, these effects are not the result of syntactic or phonological patterning. But in attempting to keep the spectre of formalism at bay and the discussion of poetic effects firmly in the field of the utilitarian, a different set of assumptions intervene in their analysis. Style is always the effect of the pursuit of relevance: poetic effects either reduce effort or increase effects. Sperber and Wilson prevent interpretation from becoming an endless process by claiming that the first interpretation

consonant with the principle of relevance is the point at which the hearer 'stops' processing. But in the case of poetic effects, how does the hearer know that a large number of weak implicatures will achieve successful communication? Sperber and Wilson's counter-claim is that such implicatures are only weakly implicated by the speaker, and are not her complete responsibility. Rather it is hearers who take considerable responsibility for their construction. But they also characterise the kinds of assumption that poetic effects produce in a way which distinguishes them from other kinds of cognitive effects. They do not add 'entirely new assumptions' to the cognitive environment of speaker and hearer, but 'marginally increase the manifestness of a great many weakly manifest assumptions'; 'poetic effects create common impressions rather than common knowledge' and can be to used to create 'a sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality'.[70]

But why do poetic effects create common impressions and a sense of (apparently) affective mutuality, as opposed to producing common knowledge and cognitive mutuality? 'Impressions' and 'affective' are only defined to the extent that they contrast with knowledge and its processing. The shift to impressions and affects (as opposed to effects) is the manifestation of a particular common sense about poetic language, namely that the poetic cannot be discussed in terms of truth claims - hence impressions - and as a result the nature of its effects (or affects) must lie elsewhere.[71] This classification of poetic affects is aligned with a congruent reading practice, most clearly visible in their reading of Flaubert's comment on the poet Leconte de Lisle:

> His ink is pale (Son encre est pâle).[72]

Sperber and Wilson consider many of the interpretative possibilities that Relevance makes possible, after arguing that a strictly literal interpretation is impossible.[73] These interpretations are plausible and congruent with a Relevance-based approach. But what is lacking is any explanation of why a reader would continue to derive weak implicatures when some contextual effects have already been achieved. Relevance, in fact, cannot explain it. Sperber and Wilson's readers go on interpreting because they have a particular relation to the 'poetic' which strongly suggests a particular kind of reading practice: a version of close reading. These are careful readers who see the multiplicity of interpretative possibilities as an element of the poetic and as a value. An interpretative practice is being conjoined with an interpretative process - inference as driven by relevance - but Sperber and Wilson see only relevance. On the one hand they insist that style arises naturally, but on the other, poetic language and effects are divorced at another place from 'ordinary language' and read differently according to a particular reading practice. Their resolution of the interpretative issues raised by poetic

language is flawed because they ignore the reading practices that readers bring to texts, practices which are shaped not only by the text but by the situation of reading and the contexts that the conjunction of text and situation mobilises and demobilises.[74] This in turn raises the issue of the gap between interpretation and reading - the two are not identical. As discussed in the introduction, reading includes a process of evaluation, evidenced here as a particular practice, but also explication. I will return to the gap between interpretation and reading, and their relations in the next chapter.

Whilst Sperber and Wilson understand poetic 'communication' in terms of a different balance of writer and reader roles and responsibilities, this does not trouble their fundamental commitment to intention. Critiques of Relevance have challenged the central role of intention within the theory, but intertextuality suggests a distinctive and stronger formulation of the problem.[75] The issue here is not whether speakers have intentions or whether hearers attribute intentions and particular meanings to speakers - they do. The question is whether intention can function as an adequate explanation of the communicative process. As noted above, Sperber and Wilson do not claim that interpretation is the recovery or recuperation of meaning - the gap between thought and utterance precludes this. But interpretation nevertheless involves the hearer's identification and/or construction of a particular communicative intention. Intertextual theories fundamentally trouble this process in three important ways. First, because they insist on what lies between 'language' and its users: a plethora of signifying systems which play an important role in constituting the 'intentions' that texts inscribe. Second, because intertextual theories, and most particularly Kristeva's, conceive the text not only as a permutation of signifying practices but of subject positions: intentions, such as they are inscribed (as decodable or inferable) are multiple and may frequently be contradictory, making the idea of single agency and intention problematic. Third, because intertextual theories contest the separation of speaker and utterance produced by intention. In pragmatic theories, intentions are always separable from the utterance, even though the utterance offers evidence of them. Kristeva in particular insists on the ways in which the permutation that is text constitutes the speaking or writing subject. Intention is central to Relevance, as it to most of Grice's work, because of the semantic indeterminacy that follows from their respective critiques of the code model and conventional meaning. In the case of Relevance, intention is the consequence of the radical individualism of the theory, but it is also the resolution, which produces a problematic circularity. The instability of text produced by an individualist account of communication requires the resolution of an originating subject. Intention is also the substitute for the constraining force of social relations which are inscribed in the conditions of communication - in the text, in the subject, in the situation of reading - and in the ways in which interpretative practices delimit the

interpretative process. Sperber and Wilson ask the right questions about interpretation - why stop? or, sometimes, why continue? - but the answer does not lie in the cognitive process and drives of an a priori individual. Communication is a not a subset, however specialised, of cognition; rather cognition is a mode of 'communication', understood, in the most general terms, as a constitutive and constituting social and cultural process. Why we stop interpreting and why we continue, need to be addressed through a consideration of reading practices and their relations to texts, subjects and situations.

4. Shared problems: the horizon of the publishable

As I began by arguing, despite the fundamental differences between these two accounts of meaning, there is a 'common' ground, although it is very differently focalised. There is also a shared problem which in turn call for a re-focusing of some of the difficulties identified in the critique - the task of the next three chapters. Here, then I will offer only an outline of the problem,. ending the chapter with a summary of the conditions with which a convincing account of intertextual interpretation must work.

The shared problem is, most simply, this: that neither tradition takes account of the specificities of reading print texts, or more particularly books. The somewhat awkward shifting between 'speaker-hearer' and 'reader', between 'utterance' and 'text' in this chapter (with the added ambiguities produced by Kristeva's polemical use of 'utterance' and Bakhtin's frequent preference for 'voice' - and other sound metaphors, such as 'polyphony') evidences an important difference in the object that these accounts construct. Grice and Sperber and Wilson, in common with much explanatory pragmatics, focus on speech, Bakhtin and Kristeva (and Barthes) on writing. But this predictable divergence masks a common underlying absence: print, or to avoid the suggestion of a 'neutral' medium, publishing as a constituent in both the production and interpretation of meaning.

The canonical speech situation or, communication's primal scene

Grice and Sperber and Wilson are only doing what comes naturally to pragmatics. The canonical speech situation positing two speaker-hearer who are co-temporal, co-spatial and co-present, is not only the most usual set of co-ordinates which are assumed as the conditions for communication, and its explanation: it is the paradigm from which all other types of language practice are modelled. This claim is variously justified. Speech (in the terms defined by the canonical situation of utterance) precedes 'writing' and presumably all other media; it is the 'parent' of all other forms. The pragmatic interest

of deixis, for example is often formulated in precessional terms which may be explained phylogenetically or ontogenetically.[76] What makes the canonical situation of utterance central to understanding language use in general is its status or classification as the originary medium-context conjunction of human language use. There are features of language and language use which can only be explained in terms of the canonical situation of utterance: understood as primary and indeed primal (in linguistic terms). And these in turn make speech the primary object and process which pragmatics accounts must explain. It is also of course the privileged object, with 'writing' as its exclusive other.

Gillian Brown and George Yule's inventory of the differences between speech and 'writing' in *Discourse Analysis* make the attractions of speech as a theoretical object, and its valorised status very highly explicit .[77] The speaker must monitor and plan her/his utterances as well as interpret the hearer's, in an ongoing situation where s/he has no record of what has been said, runs the risk of being interrupted, and may have to 'embark on public repair or modification'. Speech presents challenges to speaker-hearers and analysts alike. The writer, by contrast, has the time to monitor, plan and modify without fear of interruption: 'the writer can cross out and re-write in the privacy of his study'. It is interesting that the literary and its concomitants of profession and/or vocation enter at this point (and that 'the writer', like the 'generic' speaker of *Discourse Analysis,* is male). This is hardly a definition of someone who can and does write within the terms of a scriptorially defined literacy. The contrast is between anyperson (the speaker) and a Writer, which functions to strengthen the idea, so common in pragmatics, that speech, or more specifically conversation, is both natural and normal: it is the everyday, spontaneous, mode of communicative practice to which all other kinds can be opposed in a move which also makes writing the synecdoche for everything that is not speech. Within such a formulation there is little possibility of distinguishing between writing and print except as 'not-speech'.

There are three fundamental problems with speech as it conceptualised in pragmatics which are relevant here. First, there is no understanding of speech, writing, and print as historical categories and practices whose constitutive relations are now inextricably bound up with one another. To take only one of the most obvious examples, print technology made possible, and its concrete development within specific conditions made actual, a process of standardisation which has had massive impact on the practices of speech and writing, understood in the most general terms. Further, there are forms - the novel and the newspaper, to take the least contentious examples - as well as a plethora of genres, the existence of which are precisely the consequent of this conjunction of technology and historical conditions. The idea that all modalities of language practice can be derived and explained in relation to speech conceived as primal

(ancestral or infantile) is fundamentally wrong.[78] Second, intertextual accounts of meaning expose the fundamental flaws of speech as it is formulated in terms of the canonical speech situation. There are never only two 'speaker-hearers'. By the same token, utterances cannot be punctually timed or mapped and their meanings elicited in terms of the local co-ordinates of the 'now' and the 'here'. The meaning of any utterance is only explicable in relation to the utterances which precede and might succeed it, binding it semantically to a complex chain of 'thens' and 'theres'. But beyond this, there is a profound naiveté in the categories of co-temporality, co-spatiality, and co-presence. All of these are, in different senses, objectifications of a fundamental and presupposed commonality between speaker-hearers and their communicative 'willing'. Speaker-hearers who are in the same place at the same time may have radically different understandings of the spatio-temporal location on which they converge. The complex of social and cultural modalities which shape identity - including politics, class, gender, generation, religion, a sense (or sense of loss) of 'home', with all the complexity that migration introduces - intersect, and intersect with (sometimes converging, sometimes conflicting) ~~with~~ a set of dominant histories and geographies. Living in England, I cannot avoid 'Royal time' any more than the Christian time in which it is imbricated. I am also allowed to enjoy from a pseudo-anthropological distance the time of the ethnic other, predominantly composed as ritual, courtesy of a public spirited, consumer-oriented broadcasting practice which knows that its viewers (consumers) aren't all white (or, at least, not in the graveyard slots). This is the 'base-line' complexity of face-to-face communication, which the canonical speech situation evades by displacing its assumptions of commonality onto the 'non-controversial' co-ordinates of the co-temporal and the co-spatial.

These problems make it easy to see why pragmatics cannot 'see' the specificities of writing or print. The best that pragmatics could offer as the conditions of reading would be something like two communicants who are neither co-temporal, co-spatial or co-present (though much literary criticism is even less adequate, imagining literary reading as the endeavour to replace the minuses of pragmatic description with positive values: indeed to attain the canonical speech situation itself). Frequently, even this level of description is lacking. Sperber and Wilson and Grice draw on print occasionally as examples but with no attention to the medium and its effects on interpretation.[79] My point here is not that reading involves different interpretative processes, but that publishing introduces a specific set of constraints on meaning which are inscribed in the book that the reading subject encounters - constraints I will elaborate in detail in the next chapter.

The blindness of 'writing'

Anyone with even a glancing acquaintance with Derrida may find it hard to resist at least a flicker of complacency on encountering the raw doxa of speech's presence and privilege in pragmatics. It is difficult to narrate without irony. But 'writing' as concept has its own problems, which are of an interestingly congruent kind. It is Barthes, above all, who shatters the private, autonomous senses of writing, insisting on the text as the site of a process which is everywhere scored and shot through with history and society, transposing agency from author to the text itself. This re-coding of writing - as both the ontological condition of text and as the specific practice which produces the scriptor - is theoretically bound to a critical practice which seeks to break down all the ideologies that seek to mask and contain the multiplicities of meaning (author, work, all the constraining myths of filiation). Within such a project, the book is at once conceived, correctly, as a limiting constraint on meaning and hyperbolically dispatched as a set of boundaries which foreclose the possibility of understanding how meaning 'works'. But what is called for here is another, earlier mode of Barthesian reading, that suggested in 'Myth Today': reading the 'book' as 'at once true and unreal'.[80] It is also necessary to formulate the various ways in which the book attempts to delimit and constrain meaning.

Whilst Bakhtin's text about speech genres evidences an awareness of the differences between the spoken and the written at the most general level and Kristeva is interested in the transposition of the spoken into the written, there is, however, no sense of print and publishing as specific technology and set of processes and practices.[81] One response to this would be that such absences are in fact apparent: writing - which, after all, hardly corresponds in any straightforward way with the empirical category of 'what is written' - is a synecdoche for textual production as a whole. There is nothing that prohibits establishing the relations between the 'innumerable centres of culture'[82], which are inscribed in the text and various cultural institutions (including publishing) which make possible their reproduction and variation, their legitimacy and so forth. But whilst this is precisely what I am intending to do, it cannot be done under the 'banner' of writing. Writing is indeed a synecdoche, but one that obscures publishing as constitutive of meaning. This blindness of writing is clearest in Barthes who also gets closest to it in 'From Work to Text' where he mentions copyright as a processes of filiation.[83] Publishing enters, but the practice of filiation proposed is exclusively concerned with establishing the author's relation with the book. Are not publishers, series, formats part of this process of determination? Barthes overturns literary and Romantic theories of authorship, but not it seems the model of publishing that such theories propose, best understood as a making public of something which essentially and fundamentally always-already exists. A process of

mediation, which acts on something (the manuscript) which always precedes it. Alteration, modification, even improvement, but in all cases, there is always an a-priori something that is mediated. Barthes's 'writing' is a powerful challenge to various ideologies of composition and the compositional process, but does nothing to counter the model of publishing implicit in them. There is no possibility of thinking of publishing processes - editing, marketing, design and so on - as constitutive of writing, or of composition as only one - and rarely the most important one - of these processes. Barthes insists quite correctly that we need to rethink the temporality which governs the relations between writer and text. But what is also needed is a reversal of the temporal relations which govern how we think about writing and publishing. Publishing, or rather the horizon of the publishable, precedes and constitutes both what can be written and, what can be read.

As I noted in the introduction, not all intertextual accounts of meaning neglect the book or/and publishing. Genette's *Paratexts* is precisely an attempt to think the book, or better the edition - as a specific publishing instance. Likewise Chartier whose formulations of the materiality of the book and of reading practices, are amongst the most interesting of contemporary attempts to 'think' the book. These considerations, however, belong to the next chapter. What I want to insist on here is the centrality of publishing to any account of intertextual reading. First, because it calls for a strengthening of the distinction between textual production and textual reception - there can be no collapsing of reading and 'writing' when the written is the published, is the edition. (And indeed the reversed or synecdochic status of writing has doubtless encouraged the inertial inference that writing is reading) Second, because the publishing practices which are inscribed in the edition function explicitly to configure the text within a network of intertextual relations with other texts, which themselves suggest reading practices. One of the points of interest which will emerge is that the text may be 'caught' in various networks of intertextual relations which do not cohere, which conflict and contradict with one another. But the important point here is that the edition has to be understood as set of textual contexts which play an important role in producing and delimiting interpretative possibilities.

What then should an intertextual theory of interpretation look like? And what are the theoretical conditions of which it must take account? First, such an account must rigorously differentiate and specify the processes of production and interpretation - in terms which go beyond conventional pragmatics - to take account of the specificities of the medium, here print. This distinction is central to redressing the central shared problem in intertextual and inferential accounts. But it needs to be formulated in terms which make possible an understanding of how publishing processes shape interpretative processes; particularly the ways in which genres (intertextually

conceived) are constituted by the totality of production practices - composition, editing, marketing design, and so on - and their role in interpretation. The edition, defined as the material form in which the reader always encounters and reads the text, is a site where the processes of production can be theoretically 'read' but and also the place where the possible impact of such processes on interpretation can be assessed. Second, any such account must be embedded in a model which understands meaning as a process of transformation. The processes of interpretation have to be theorised in terms which take account of textual 'resemblance', both similarity and difference. Third, the model must be inscribed with an understanding of social and cultural relations as inherently and constitutively historical and conflictual, which will shape all its concepts. Fourth, such a model calls for a clear distinction between process and practice, which applies to both production and reception, where a practice is the actualisation of a process or set of processes within specific constitutive conditions. Interpretation is always the actualisation of decoding and inferential processes in the form of specific practices, shaped by the text, reader and conditions of reading. Fifth, such an account will not approach utterance interpretation as a process of resolution and equate that resolution with either the author's intended meaning or the text's preferred meaning. Nevertheless, it must recognise that meaning is always an attempt to fix, to delimit; and be able to differentiate possible interpretations and explain why certain interpretations are more possible or probable than others in particular conditions of reading. Finally, it must also consider the relations between interpretation and reading. The two are not identical, reading is 'more' than interpretation - understood loosely here in terms which will soon be specified as translation. It also involves other processes: explanation (attempts to answer the question why a text means) and evaluation (the process by which readers evaluate texts and their meanings). Their role in shaping interpretation and interpretative practices also need to be assessed. Reading is not writing, but nor is it (only) interpretation.

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[1] Oliver Stone (director), *Wall Street* (US, 1987).

[2] 'What is important for the speaker about a linguistic form is not that it is a stable and always self-identical signal, but it is always a changeable and adaptable sign', Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, p.68.

[3] Sperber, 'Claude Lévi-Strauss Today', *On Anthropological Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985): 'For Lévi-Strauss, all his work is a defence and illustration of

structuralist method ... But I shall argue, structuralism has become an uninspiring frame for an otherwise stimulating and inspired picture', (p.69). In 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' in Writing *and Difference* (London, Routledge, 1990), Derrida discusses Lévi-Strauss's work on the incest taboo, which is both natural (universal) and cultural (a prohibition), as a scandal if the conceptual system presupposes a difference between nature and culture (p.283). Lévi-Strauss's method, argues Derrida, 'consists in conserving all these old concepts within the domain of empirical discovery while here and there denouncing their limits, treating them as tools which can still be used ... This is how the language of the social sciences criticises *itself* (p.284).

[4] Gert Rickhart and Hans Strohner editors, *Inferences in Text Processing* , Introduction, p.5. Compare and contrast this with Lecercle's 'maxim of vagueness' in *Interpretation as Pragmatics*, articulated from a, broadly speaking, post-structuralist position: 'Natural languages have fuzzy rules and indulge in vague reference. This goes far beyond ambiguous utterances, which are determinate in that the possibilities of choice are limited ... Not so innumerable other forms of under- or over-determinations of meaning, from *non-dit* to Gricean implicature, to slips of the tongue, taking in portmanteau-words, malapropisms and all manners of wordplay' (p.77).

[5] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p117: 'Of course misunderstandings ... occur. They are not attributable to noise in the acoustic channel. The question is whether they happen because the mechanisms of verbal communication are sometimes improperly applied, or because these mechanisms at best make successful communication probable, but do not guarantee it. We will pursue this second alternative.'

[6] Sperber, 'The Epidemiology of Beliefs', *Explaining Culture*, p.83: '...what human communication achieves in general is merely some degree of resemblance between the communicator's and the audience's thoughts. Strict replication, if it exists at all, should be viewed as just a limiting case of maximal resemblance, rather than as the norm of communication'. This 'loosening-up' of the communicative process, does not of course do anything to moderate the very strong intentionalism which is central to Relevance. But Sperber does explicitly formulate here the idea that 'a process of communication is basically one of transformation' (p.83).

[7] As mentioned in chapter two, in 'Irony and the Use-Mention Distinction' (*Radical Pragmatics*, p.297), they make it clear that they see their work as founded in rhetoric, and in terms which go beyond a pragmatic account of figures: 'There are a number of obvious similarities between linguistics and the study of rhetoric ... A GENERAL theory of rhetoric should be concerned with basic psychological and interpretative mechanisms which remain invariant from culture to culture', And indeed, the proposed title for *Relevance* at this juncture was 'Foundations of Rhetorical Theory'.

[8] Sperber, 'The Modularity of Thought and the Epidemiology of Representations', in *Mapping the Mind: Domain Specificity in Cognition and Culture*, edited by Lawrence A. Hirschfield and Susan A. Gelman (Cambridge, CUP, 1994), p60.

[9] Voloshinov, *Marxism*, p.9.

[10] The read-write distinction and its breakdown is discussed in the introduction and in chapter one.

[11] John Ellis's discussion of the differences between film and television, including those of reception and how this shapes the medium's mode of address is one much cited instance of the interest in the specificities of medium. Cited in David Morley's 'Changing Paradigms in Audience Studies', in *Remote Control: Television, Audiences and Cultural Power* , edited by Seiter et al, pp.16-43, p27. John Fiske's notion of 'the producerly', is elaborated in the same volume ('Moments of Television: Neither the Text Nor the Audience', pp.56-78). Fiske tries to adapt the Barthesian 'writerly' to the producerly which he proposes as a central characteristic of television and its reception. This is a 'classic' instance of just such a lazy collapsing of production and reception in general which is willed rather than effected by the tendentious lexical choice of 'producerly' with its suggestions of the power and final decision making role of the producer. (It is also as it happens rather weak on medium specificity). But in what sense can the practice of reception proposed by Fiske's producerly televisual text which 'delegates the production of meaning to the viewer-producer' (p.63) be comparable with the institutions, practices and technologies of television production?

[12] On these distinctions, see for example, Charlotte Brunsdon in 'Text and Audience', Remote Control, pp.116-129, p.125.

[13] Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text' in *Desire in Language*, p.36.

[14] There is also a tendentiousness in the way that Kristeva argues that novelistic inference is non-logical, shaped by Kristeva's assertion of the special challenge that poetic languages poses to the usual object of a would-be 'scientific' linguistics. I do not debate the incommensurability of logical and natural languages. What I take issue with is that the difference seems to be assumed to be the characteristic of a particular type of language.

[15] Quoted in Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', *The Dialogic Imagination*, p.306.

[16] 'Discourse in the Novel', p.306, my emphasis.

[17] In this context, Gordon Gecko is the arch anti-hypocrite.

[18] Lawrence Grossberg, 'The In-difference of TV', *Screen* 28, 2 (1987), pp.28-45, p.33.

[19] David Morley, *Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.27.

[20] See for example, *Family Television* (London: Comedia / Routledge, 1986).

[21] Morley, *Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies*, pp. 27-8. He also argues for a re-focus on genre as a central concept in audience studies, see for example pp.127 - 30 where he discusses work which has explored the popular in terms of the particular cultural competencies of social constituencies and how this maps with the genres which are popular with these groups.

[22] There is, of course, a paradox in this binary between hyperbolic intertextuality and the more 'limited' polysemy that Morley continues to propose. Hall's encoding-decoding model (mentioned in the introduction) which Morley continues to view as a productive starting point for thinking about meaning is itself, of course, indebted to Voloshinov.

[23] John Corner, 'Meaning, Genre and Context: The Problematics of Public Knowledge in the New Audience Studies' in *Mass Media and Society*, edited by James Curran and Michael Gurevitch (Sevenoaks: Edward Arnold/Hodder and Stoughton, 1991), pp.267-284, p.269.

[24] Corner, 'Meaning, Genre and Context', p.278.

[25] Corner, 'Meaning, Genre and Context', pp.278-9.

[26] Corner also mentions text-comprehension models and, what he terms, 'implicatory' meanings, though there is no detailed reference of development of either. See p.274 and p.271.

[27] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.132.

[28] *Relevance*, p.133.

[29] *Relevance*, p.137.

[30] 'Accessing' and 'accessibility' are one of a number of terms in the Relevance lexicon which model human cognition and communication from a paradigm of information-processing.

[31] *Relevance*, p.144.

[32] *Relevance*, p.144.

[33] This is not true of Kintsch, but, as I will show below, his model of the textual is somewhat crude and at odds with intertextual theories.

[34] *Relevance*, p.170.

[35] Further, the example in question suggests a connection between censorship and codes: both constrain speaker 'freedom'.

[36] Grice, Meaning Revisited', *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.298.

[37] Grice, 'Retrospective Epilogue', *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.361.

[38] 'Retrospective Epilogue', *Studies in the Way of Words*, p.361.

[39] As discussed in chapter one, Voloshinov's work is the most explicitly Marxist, but Kristeva's emphasis on the totality of signifying practices which together constitute the General Culture and her interest in the ways a broadly Marxist sense of history and society are inscribed in texts and subjects evidences a similar commitment. Bakhtin is, of course, more ambivalent and his politics have been subject to considerable analysis (see chapter one above), but his emphasis on what is clearly social and cultural conflict within texts and the heteroglossia as a whole are compatible with a broadly Marxist position.

[40] The classic discussion of this is in Barthes's 'Myth Today' in *Mythologies* . See in particular pp.115-6.

[41] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.219.

[42] Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*, p.191. Further: 'All text genres require domain-specific strategies and knowledge', p.167.

[43] 'Broadly' inferential because, as noted in chapter two, for Kintsch, only the controlled processing of logical inference which generates new information, strictly deserves to be called inference (Kintsch's category D) though the other categories do describe inferential processes.

[44] Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*, p.38.

[45] Further, the only logic which could make stories and legal arguments comparable categories is the particular comprehension strategy: the former focusing on causal relations, the latter on contradiction. This is perhaps not surprising, given Kintsch's interest in the process, but the neglect of the textual (as a particular type of 'surface structure') is not the necessary consequence of any theory of psychological process. Kintsch deduces that it is: 'therefore'...'the text structure is only indirectly important' (p.4). But this seems to mistake a particular kind of approach for a choice between two objects whose relations must surely be strongly imbricated in any account of text comprehension or interpretation. He is assuming that text structure is only indirectly important. But why shouldn't a theory of comprehension as psychological process be interested in considering the role of surface structure in the 'extended' textual sense and consider how it might be cognitively represented?

[46] The same goes for the only ~~the~~ attempt to consider explicitly and in detail the relations between Relevance and genre, *On the Cognitive Role of Genre: a Relevance-Theoretic Perspective* (University of London thesis, 2001). As the title suggests, Relevance is the dominant through which genre is conceived and considered. As in the case of Kintsch, genre is not considered in terms which ~~are~~ is congruent with intertextual theories, although Unger's understanding of how genre can inflect tense and mood for example is a significant improvement. Unger argues that 'each individual utterance may create its own expectations of relevance' and therefore may contribute to expectations of the discourse as a whole' (p.136). The main problems are twofold. First, generic knowledge is a variety of encyclopaedic knowledge, the latter conceived in terms of the singular logic that Sperber and Wilson accord to it (p.296). Secondly, and following from the commitment to Relevance as the explanatory model for theorising communication (Relevance theory has implications for literary theory (p.11), but not the other way round; 'the role of genre in communication [can] be best explained with Relevance theory' (p.286), genre is not a necessary part of interpretation, it may or may not be an 'influence' (p.289): 'genre does not always play a part in utterance interpretation' (p.293); 'genre does not always

have a hermeneutical [i.e. interpretative] function, when it has this function may be strong or weak (p.292, my parenthesis).

[47] As discussed in chapter two, manner is the only maxim which generates detachable implicatures. The other maxims (the 'content' maxims) generate non-detachable ones. This assumes that 'it is not possible to find another way of saying the same thing (or approximately the same thing) which simply lacks the implicature', Grice, 'Further Notes on Logic and Conversation' in Studies *in the Way of Words*, (p.43). The problem as discussed in chapter two is that Grice seems to be assuming that form only sometimes plays a part in meaning, that it is possible to say 'the same thing' or something approximating to it without impacting on the implicatures produced - the effect of his naive form/content distinction, which makes manner the special place where form matters.

[48] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.219.

[49] 'A full-fledged meta-representational capability such as the one found in human languages and in human thinking is based on the possibility of interpreting any expression-token as representing another token of the same expression, or the expression-type, or more generally some expression-type or token it resembles in relevant respects', Sperber, 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective', http // perso.club-internet.fr/sperber/metarep.htm., January 2000, p.1

[50] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.228.

[51] *Relevance*, p.227.

[52] *Relevance*, p.229.

[53] *Relevance*, p.161.

[54] This is also true of the way in which Sperber discusses the development of logic as a cognitive response to the deception of others and the advantages of communication in general, which extend the range of informational resources available. See 'Metarepresentation in an Evolutionary Perspective', p.6.

[55] Bakhtin's emphasis on the ways in which languages inscribe belief systems and Kristeva's account of the speaking or writing subject's intersubjectivity which 'follows' from intertextuality are obvious instances here. See chapter one.

[56] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.16.

[57] *Relevance*, p.16.

[58] Hence one of Sperber's uses of 'quotation' and 'disquotation'. Disquotation does not always suggest a distance to the belief however, as in the example 'I am one of the people who believes that ... where what follows is still quoted (though clearly such statements can be asserted in the negative). Sperber's use of quoting and disquoting seems to be in significant part motivated by a desire to distinguish the categories of intuitive and reflective belief. The elaboration of 'distance' or proximity to knowledge and belief would seem to require further elaboration to take account of the subject's position and relation to it. Contrast the following: he is one of the people who believes that x, I am one of the people that believes that x, we are some of the people who believe that x ... and so on. I will return to the subject's relation to particular knowledge and its role in interpretation in subsequent chapters.

[59] The assumption that the cultural coincides with what is shared can obviously be critiqued from non-intertextual positions as well. See for example, D. Hymes, 'Toward Ethnographies of Communication: The Analysis of Communicative Events' in *Language and Social Context*, edited by Pier Paolo Giglioli (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), p.35: 'I subscribe to the view that what is distinctively cultural as an aspect of behaviours or things is a question of capabilities acquired or elicited in social life, not a question of the extent to which the behaviour or things themselves are socially shared ... To restrict the concept of the cultural to something shared to the limits of a community is an arbitrary limitation on understanding, both of human beings and the cultural.'

[60] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, pp.190-1.

[61] Most of Grice's examples are similar in that a shared social and cultural world is usually presupposed. The 'world' however is somewhat different from Sperber and Wilson's, and if anything narrower: professional, gossipy and frequently sexist - 'X is meeting a woman tonight' is his first example of a Generalised Conversational Implicature in 'Logic and Conversation' (*Studies in the Way of Words*, p.37). The world of the Oxford Common Room perhaps, the 'common' of which shares something with his notions of shared or common knowledge. On the subject of 'equal opportunities', it should be noted that Sperber and Wilson are consistent in their use of 'she' for the generalised speaker and he, for the hearer on the grounds of 'ease of exposition'. This choice flouts conventional

expectations suggesting that 'ease' is somewhat tendentious; but more importantly and in ways which are perfectly consistent with their arguments, it suggests a complete disregard of gender as a social process which shapes the speaker or hearer's relation to knowledge. Talbot and Mey also mention the 'characters' in the Relevance examples in their review, 'Computation and the Soul', *Semiotica*, 72, 3/4 (1988), pp. 291-339. However their comments are not particularly salient. Of course it is stereotypical to make Peter the surgeon, and Peter and Mary may well classify as 'yuppies' (p.324); but the important point, as made above, is that the construction of characters who are socially and culturally so similar banalises and indeed renders invisible the social character of knowledge.

[62] On other non-intertextual critiques of Relevance's ultra-rationalism, see for example Talbot and Mey's review, 'Computation and the Soul', mentioned directly above, where they describe Sperber and Wilson's conception of the human as 'ontological logicism' (p.315). Kintsch's account of the multiple ways in which representations might be organised is much more flexible in this sense, allowing, for example, for associative relations which would take account of the impact of the psychic on interpretative and cognitive processes, see *Comprehension*, pp.34-7.

[63] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.47.

[64] I say 'suggest' because this theory is only sometimes fully explicated, most obviously in Voloshinov and in Kristeva's account of psychic processes.

[65] See Sperber, 'Apparently Irrational Beliefs' in *On Anthropological Knowledge* , especially pp.58-9.

[66] 'Apparently Irrational Beliefs', p.55.

[67] 'Apparently Irrational Beliefs', p.53.

[68] The relations between intertextuality and a broadly Foucauldian idea of discourse will be discussed in some detail in later chapters.

[69] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.222.

[70] *Relevance*, p.224.

[71] It is not surprising in this context that Sperber treats poetic language as semi-propositional in his discussion of irrational beliefs, 'Apparently Irrational Beliefs', p.53.

[72] *Relevance*, p.237.

[73] Their grounds for this are rather weak. They ask how the colour of the ink might be of import (p.237). Given that in the case of the Paul and Henry example the colour of ink was of crucial importance this seems a rather summary dismissal.

[74] Their characterisation of a 'good creative metaphor' is similarly flawed: 'The surprise or beauty of a successful creative metaphor lies in this condensation, in the fact that a single expression which has itself been loosely used will determine a very wide range of acceptable weak implicatures', (p.237). The tension here, between the description of a cognitive process and a vocabulary of aesthetic appreciation marks the same conjunction of process and practice. The shadow of Romanticism that is visible here is perfectly congruent with their commitment to the centrality of intention. A. Furlong (University of London PhD, 1996), attempts to resolve the problem of why readers of literary texts might either stop or not stop interpreting by creating a category of 'literary interpretation' which involves 'a much more systematic assessment of all of the evidence provided by the text' (Cited in Billy Clark, 'Stylistic Analysis and Relevance Theory', *Language and Literature*, 5, 3, (1996), pp.163-78, p.175). This is clearly another name for a particular interpretative practice and further its only other is 'spontaneous' interpretation. There is of course no practice-free interpretation - an issue I will return to at length in subsequent chapters.

[75] See for example Talbot and Mey, 'Computation and the Soul' p293-4. Note also Levinson's review which draws a distinction between Relevance as a theory of speaker meaning and utterance token meaning and work on Generalised Conventionalised Implicatures which is 'in contrast a theory of preferred or default interpretation, of utterance type meaning', 'A Review of Relevance', *Journal of Linguistics* , 25 (1989), pp455-472, p461.

[76] For example, the phylogenetic argument is made by John Lyons, *Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), quoted in Levinson, *Pragmatics*, p.63: 'There is much in the structure of languages that can only be explained on the assumption that they have developed for communication in face-to-face interaction. This is clearly so as far as deixis is concerned.' Levinson's comment introduces the ontogenetic one: 'Deictic systems in natural languages are not arbitrarily organised around the features of just any of the many different kinds of medium and context in which

language is used. Rather there is an essential assumption of that basic face-to-face conversational context in which all humans acquire language' (p.63).

[77] Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp.4-19. Citations below all refer to pp.4-5.

[78] I emphasise historical conditions in the above to avoid any suggestion of a technology determining meaning, a view or inflection which is widespread and which appears in some surprising places. For example, Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983), whilst clearly aware of the dangers of proposing a determining relation between print technology and the novel still seems to fall into the trap, see pp.46-49.

[79] 'Son encre est pâle' is one such example in *Relevance.* Grice includes amongst his examples of conversational implicature in 'Logic and Conversation', a letter (p.33), a review (p.37) and some lines from a poem by Blake, (p.35).

[80] 'Myth Today', *Mythologies*, p.128.

[81] Kristeva's analysis of the way that the proto-novel resignifies the blazon - a spoken or indeed shouted genre - which is transposed or translated into 'laudatory description' is one clear instance of this interest. See chapter one..

[82] 'The Death of the Author', *Image, Music, Text*, p.146.

[83] 'From Work to Text', *Image, Music, Text*, p.161.

PART TWO

Chapter Four: Theoretical Preliminaries

The aim of this chapter is to elaborate the terms, conditions and goals of a mode of intertextual analysis which will be developed in chapters five and six through a detailed examination of two case-studies. Its starting point is a conceptualisation of the text as a set of multiple, often divergent and indeed contradictory interpretative possibilities - a position grounded in both intertextual and pragmatic assumptions. The aims of the analysis are first to capture, represent and articulate these possibilities and their varying contingency - that is which interpretations are most, more, less and least likely. Such an analysis must specify not only possible interpretations, but also interpretative processes and their instantiation as practices in particular conditions of reading. This in turn calls for a focus not just on the text but on the reader and the situation of reading: a rhetorical approach. A fundamental modality of the conditions of reading is the material form in which the reader encounters the text, and the analysis focuses therefore on the interpretative possibilities and practices proposed by particular editions and not 'the text' understood as some essence of all its versionings. Furthermore, the analysis must represent and articulate the edition not only as the always-already material form of the text as it is encountered by the reader, but as a site where publishing processes intersect in the form of particular production practices which can be understood as intertextual in specific ways. This focus is inscribed in the choice of object for the two case-studies which, involve publishing categories: classics (chapter five) and literary theory textbooks (chapter six). In each case the analysis aims to elaborate the role of publishing in shaping, not only the meanings of particular texts, but also the genres and other categories which play a central role in delimiting and fixing interpretation.

1. A framework of concepts

The representation of interpretative possibilities and what might be termed their graduated contingency is a necessary counter to the ungraduated and monolithic contingency that intertextual theories tend to assume, and to the pragmatic goal of interpretative resolution. Central here is what governs this variable contingency: the reader's knowledges, the knowledges inscribed in the situation of reading, the genres and discourses of the text, all of which will be designated in the analysis as types of interpretative context which may be mobilised and/or constructed and deployed in interpretation. There is a potential ambiguity in the use of 'context' here which requires clarification. Any account of the interpretative process which assigns a central role to

inferencing is required to specify how particular knowledges are mobilised and/or constructed and deployed. In using the phrase 'interpretative context', I mean knowledge that may be utilised in interpretation, a 'may' which also has variable strengths, which can be specified. Given the pragmatic neglect of the textual, a central interest here will be the role of genre and other textual categories as interpretative contexts, more simply referred to as textual contexts.

Following on from this, the analysis must further specify interpretative processes (given the critique of intertextual accounts), and in particular, the role of inferencing within a process conceived as intertextual and constrained by both the textual and discursive character of knowledge as it is inscribed in the text and as it exists for the reader. I wish to draw attention to two issues here. The first relates to my use of the terms 'implicature' and 'implicate' in this and subsequent chapters. My usage breaks with the necessary relation that Gricean and Relevance-based accounts propose between an implicature (or set of implicatures) and the individual signatory who is 'responsible' for them. In my analysis, implicatures are made possible by textual and discursive relations and not bound to signatories. Implicatures may be weakly or strongly implicated, but they are always made possible by intertextual relations. I am retaining the terms implicature and implicate, albeit in this recast sense, because I wish to maintain the distinction between pragmatic and logical categories. My interest is in implicatures (and implicating), and not implications (and implying) - the objective properties of an utterance. In this sense then, implicature seeks to foreground the discursive character of knowledge, the absence (in contradiction with much pragmatic common-sense) of a singular logic. This is turn links to the second issue. I am drawing a theoretical distinction here between the textual and the discursive. Genre is a fundamental textual category and although one of my aims is to elaborate a stronger and more expansive definition of genre, a brief provisional definition is called for here. Bakhtin's definition, a typical set of relations between writing subject, reader and the always-already textualised object of utterance, with its strong rhetorical emphasis, is the obvious starting point. However given the problems discussed in chapter one, certain modifications are required. Both writing and reading subject are definitively conceived here as inscribed in and prescribed by the genre. This is the Kristevan version, which avoids the difficulties produced by Bakhtin's slips between 'real' and 'inscribed' or prescribed reader and writer. Throughout this analysis, 'prescribed reader' is my preferred locution for what is elsewhere most frequently referred to as 'the implied reader'. Given the concern here with implicature and implied meanings in strict and specialised senses, 'implied reader' could easily be confusing. But the choice also marks both a distance from Iser's phenomenological approach and an attempt to represent the rhetorical force of address: hence prescribe rather than

inscribe.[1] A second inconsistency in Bakhtin's account of genre, his retreat from the concept of situation that his strong account of genre proposes, is not conceived as a problem here. The 'horizon of the publishable' is explicitly intended to capture some of the institutional dimensions of genre production. Third, 'The Problem of Speech Genres' in particular neglects narrative. Retextualisation does not preclude 're-narrativisation', but I wish to foreground this explicitly because I am aiming to illustrate the importance of narrative within genre. I am indebted here to Genette's categories in *Narrative Discourse*, in particular 'order' (the 'anachronies' between the order of events as they can be presumed to have happened diegetically and the order in which they are narrated), 'duration' (what Genette terms the 'speed' of narration: the relative speeds at which events are narrated) and 'frequency' (the relation between the number of times an event is narrated and the number of times it occurs.[2] Therefore any genre has typical textualisations of order, duration and frequency. This foregrounding of narrative, and in particular narrative order, is also intended to draw attention to the textual character of knowledge, which scripts, schemas and the like do not. Needless to say, there is no one-to-one relation between text and genre, the genres that constitute the text are multiple but one or more genres may exert more signifying force on the permutation that is text. Often indeed, a particular genre functions as the dominant within a text. Conventional romance, for example, often configures a relation between the romance narrative and the bildungsroman (the heroine acquires self-knowledge and a place in the world by hero's side) and/or the heroine may play at being a detective (why did the hero leave the party so abruptly when ... ?, why will he never talk about ... ? etc.). But these genres (and others) are subordinated to and transformed by romance: the heroine's self-knowledge is limited by the gender relations that romance makes possible: hero and heroine will not decide to pursue an on-off affair so that the heroine can pursue her all-important career; the hero will not turn out to be a serial killer. Finally, the possibilities of a genre always exceed any particular instantiation of it: a genre is never wholly encapsulated in a single text.

Discourse is understood here in broadly Foucauldian terms as both knowledge and the conditions of its possibility. The objects, concepts, rules, procedures and positions which together constitute what Chartier terms, in an illuminating article, the 'limits of the thinkable' at a particular historical moment.[3] My focus here, however, is on particular discourses: in chapter five, for example, discourses of the author, of the work, of literary value. My interest does not lie in the conditions of emergence of these discourses, or in elaborating the discontinuities of knowledge more generally, but in their formal workings, their internal logics and mechanisms of self-regulation. For example, what makes it possible to define a novel as a relationship between author and characters? (a concept of the work as the instantiation of authorial experience and

presence; a fundamental refusal of the formal character of 'the work' and so on.). The debt to Foucault is of a strictly limited kind and, as should be clear, does not encompass the conviction that his analysis of the processes of power are adequate.[4] However the formal, almost sealed quality of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and 'The Order of Discourse' in particular, seem particularly valuable because they leave open the possibility of formulating and addressing the question of what, other than discourse, might govern discourse: defined in this way, discourse is a powerful counter-concept to the knowledge relations that Sperber and Wilson and inferential pragmatics more generally tend to assume.

The distinction between genre and discourse that I am drawing is of course theoretical. Genre, conceived in broadly Bakhtinian terms, and discourse are congruent to the degree that both are centrally concerned with the historical situation of utterance or enunciation. But what I want to assert here and demonstrate in subsequent chapters is the contingent and various relations between genre and discourse and the signifying constraints that each may effect on the other. For example, a discourse may continue across genre shifts within a text; alternatively, a shift of genre may effect a shift of discourse (this is a detailed point of discussion in chapter six); the same discourse may operate in and over a number of different genres. In nineteenth century English writing for example, certain physiognomical discourses ranged over numerous genres, including those of science and the novel.[5] T S Eliot's 1948 essay-polemic, *Notes Towards The Definition of Culture*, and Ruth Rendell's 1978 thriller *Judgement in Stone,* share the same anti-mass civilisation discourse and the first sentence of Rendell's novel memorably attests its continuing force: '... Eunice Parchman killed the Coverdale family because she could not read or write.'[6] Alternatively again, the operating discourse of a genre may change. Nineteenth-century romance narratives configured a number of ethical, in particular Christian ethical discourses - the sinner Rochester's suffering and final redemption in *Jane Eyre* is one obvious example.[7] This is but a residue in the ultimate cinematic romance of the 1990s, *Titanic*, where the dominant discourse of individual freedom is modulated within the specific terms of the American dream.[8] These contingent relations are clearly central to interpretative practices. To take a simple example, the contemporary reader of romance may not mobilise the ethical meanings of character attributes and behaviours in nineteenth century romance narratives and/or may translate these into the discourses of individual choice and self-improvement.

Following on from this, the mode of analysis must configure the interpretative process and its possibilities in rhetorical terms. First, interpretation as it is considered here in relation to print texts is always conceived as a part of a larger process: reading. Whilst interpretation and interpretative processes are the central interest of this thesis,

these cannot be abstracted from reading, which also encompasses the processes of explication and evaluation. Interpretation, is, as mentioned in the introduction, conceived broadly as a process of translation. To answer the question what does the text mean (the question that interpretation poses), the reader must both identify its languages (in Bakhtin's sense) and transpose the text into these languages. Conceiving interpretation as a translative process is clearly compatible with conceiving the text as intertextuality. The text incorporates a multiplicity of languages which frequently converge on lexical and other resources. The multiaccentuality of the work render the issue of which language or languages are present in the text central to interpretation. Interpretation defined as translation is also intended to capture the ways in which interpretation always transforms, varies or alters meaning. This understanding of the interpretative process as changing the matter that is interpreted accords with both inferential and intertextual accounts given their fundamental challenges to en-de-coding as a singular process: there is always a gap between production and interpretation. But as in the case of textual production, where for example a genre may be radically transformed or minimally varied in a new textual context, the gap varies. The changes or alterations it effects may be minimal (interpretation as a case of variation) or extensive (interpretation as a case of transformation). It is also important to note here that the reader's interpretation-translation is not dependent on correctly identifying the languages of the text, some or all of these may be misidentified, but a transposition of the text into the identified languages, an interpretation, can still take place. I will return to these issues in chapters five and six, where I examine the translative interpretative practices that texts and editions propose.

This in turn is a reminder that interpretation and reading are always instantiated as practices, governed by the text, the reader and the situation of reading. These modalities give specific contents to interpretation, explication and evaluation, order this economy of reading in different ways and render particular practices more or less explicit. Detective fiction and thrillers both propose that we interpret a set of seemingly random objects and events as clues which may signify identity and/or motivation and which together form a meaningful pattern. In a very different vein, the 'cosy kitchen' of estate-agents' copy is immediately translated as 'poky kitchen with no ventilation' and 'loads of potential' as 'you'll have to take out a second mortgage to make this place habitable'. These interpretations are governed by a particular type of explication and knowledge of the genre which in this case proscribes any representation that could be construed as negative. When we read interviews with government ministers or their shadows, our evaluation may not only encompass our own relations to what they say (do we agree or not? is what they say true or not?) but their performance (we may or may not admire their ability to evade or deflect difficult questions). The situation of

reading likewise shapes the instantiation of these processes as particular practices. The literary studies seminar, to take a very obvious case, renders explication (which may of course take many forms) an explicit practice which often follows highly prescribed procedures. The reader whose evaluative practice includes the minister's performance is familiar with a variety of political genres and discourses which are a staple of the contemporary representation of politics within the media. These brief examples also show that the relations between the practices that constitute reading vary. In detective fiction, for example, interpretation is the dominant which subordinates and transforms explication and evaluation.

A rhetorical approach must take account of who reads and in what situation: the conditions of reading. However, whilst I will on occasion hypothesise particular readers and situations, this is not central practice to the analysis. First, because, in keeping with the general direction of the thesis, I will characterise the conditions of reading in abstract terms: in terms of the knowledges that are constructed and deployed in interpretation. Central here is the status of the knowledge for the reader and within the situation (its status may conflict in this respect). 'Status' here suggests a number of modalities: the presence or absence of particular knowledge, its familiarity or relative novelty, its perceived authority and legitimacy. These modalities are central to assessing the varying possibilities and probabilities of its use or non-use in interpretation. A further reason for characterising conditions of reading in these terms is in distinction from the canonical speech situation and its problems. The categories of particular reader and particular situation cannot capture the complex relations between knowledge and authority and their role in interpretation: some concept the 'General Culture' (Kristeva's term for the totality of signifying practices and their relations) must inform the analysis, but one which also takes accounts of institutions (a weakness in Bakhtin and Kristeva). Further, given the attention that rhetorical approaches demand for the context-bound character of utterance (with context understood in its broadest sense and not exclusively from the standpoint of the hearer/reader), the book or, better, the edition - the material form in which the text is encountered - is a fundamental constituent of the conditions of reading. Its neglect, in intertextual accounts of production, inferential pragmatics and pragmatics more generally, makes it the central interest of the rhetorical approach developed here. The analysis will therefore focus in most detail on what might be termed the 'supply' side of the interpretative process: the interpretative possibilities that the edition proposes. I am using 'propose' and 'proposal' to underscore the fact that no interpretation is necessary and that what counts is relative strength or weakness.

2. Theorising the book

As noted in the introduction, the book has become a renewed site of theoretical interest over the last twenty or so years - in literary studies (where the interest is predominantly driven by new historicism), and also in the narrower field of textual studies, specifically in debates about the theory and practice of textual editing. It is in the latter where the book as object and the processes and practices of interpretation most clearly intersect. Here, a range of post-structuralist and historicist critiques have both challenged the long established ideal of securing a single, definitive and authoritative text that accords with the author's will and intention, and provoked a powerfully formulated defence of 'traditional' practice.[9]

It is now almost impossible to represent the orthodoxies of bibiographical/textual studies without a certain post-structuralist irony: a set of practices primarily organised by an anxious narrative of textual decline, understood as the inevitable if lamentable wear and tear of cultural reproduction and circulation. Its vocabulary of 'corruption' and 'purgation' defines the scholar's work as a kind of textual cleansing, exemplified in Williams's and Abbott's *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*:

> Clearly, a doctrine of textual original sin should be one of the credal statements of literary scholars. Not only do texts have lives but these lives tend to go from bad to worse.[10]

As Jerome McGann, one of the most interesting critics of textual studies, points out, the recuperative or restorative goal of textual studies was always, in some sense, acknowledged as impossible, but it was still pursued as 'a heuristic operation': a measure of Romantic defeat would always accompany the heroic effort.[11]. Within this paradigm, authorial intention was the key to recuperation and restoration, although its place of residence was always a vexed question (In the manuscript? In the first edition? In the final edition sanctioned by the author?).[12]

Critiques of the assumptions and practices of textual editing have foregrounded the difficulties raised by intention and the theorisation of the text itself. As George Bornstein points out in his introduction to a recent collection on editorial theory, the text is no longer conceived as 'unitary and received', but as 'contingent and constructed'.[13] The fundamental and explicit assumption governing the 'new' textual studies is that meaning is fundamentally and irrevocably unfixed: there are no final fixities to recuperate. This assumption may be mobilised in different discursive forms but in all cases it has a significant impact on textual editing, making possible a critique of its established practices, and the proposal of new protocols. For example, a symptomatic critique of 'traditional' scholarly editing might expose the variational crux (Is Hamlet's flesh ~~it~~ too 'solid' or too 'sullied'?) as a disavowal of textuality, the

carefully managed moment which acknowledges as a-typical and aberrant what is in fact the everyday condition of meaning and interpretation.[14] Alternatively, textual editing becomes the attempt to find ways of representing textual contingency in editions which represent the text as an ongoing process, where, for example, the apparatus is foregrounded and the status of the editor as a reader is marked.[15] At the same time, the practices of textual editing are also conceived as a kind of a bulwark against the perceived 'excesses' of post-structuralist theory. The same Bornstein who asserts that the text is 'contingent and constructed' also challenges the notion of an 'endless freeplay' of meaning with the empirical reality of a finite number of versions of the text.[16] Likewise, Philip Cohen in his introduction to another collection welcomes the insights and challenges of such critiques but also has hopes for a middle ground: which will not result in 'the unqualified substitution of structuralist and deconstructionist truisms for traditional intentionalist ones'.[17]

These arguments are valuable to the extent that they foreground the signifying functions of particular editorial practices. They can also underscore the historicity of both the book and editing practices: McGann's proposed protocols for a historicist mode of critical editing, for example, includes an account of the relevant discourses which informed the text's various and variant versionings.[18] But there are two specific issues which make the 'new' textual studies a problematic starting point for a general theoretical model of the book or edition. The first is not specific to textual studies; rather, it replicates a theoretical error in intertextually-inflected accounts of reception: the binary of necessity versus a monolithic contingency. Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged that editing generates and delimits interpretative possibilities, there is an over-hasty shift from this to the contingencies of editorial practice as they are represented in different editions of the same text, which diminishes the value of the general insight. The fact of interpretative variation across editions does not undercut the process of fixing produced by any one. The second problem is that the 'middle ground' that much of the new textual studies wishes to occupy is not really a middle ground at all: it is half-way between two wholly incompatible modes of discourse: intertextuality and intentionality, for example.[19] Further, the obvious focus of critical editing on historical, literary and most frequently fiction texts makes it impossible to generalise a model of the book or publishing in general terms. Such limits may not be surprising, but they do restrict the extent and force of its critique. For example, there is no general attempt to consider the ways in which the very work of critical editing contributes to the construction and reproduction of the text's value - a central issue if the proposed reading practices an edition proposes are being examined. An edition which represents the text as a contingent process, as variation and so forth may challenge the orthodoxies of traditional critical editing but do nothing to foreground the

processes which inscribe its value in general terms: a variorum edition (which represents the base text and its variations) of a Barbara Cartland novel is an impossibility. The new textual studies draws attention to many interesting aspects of scholarly editing but it cannot fully capture its specificity because this depends on a set of contrasts with other publishing categories and practices, configured within a concept of publishing processes and institutions in general terms. By contrast, Gérard Genette's *Paratexts* does suggests a general model of the edition, and one explicitly formulated in intertextual and pragmatic terms.[20]

Paratexts is the first and only sustained attempt to theorise the interpretative and reading practices proposed by the edition in general terms.[21] Genette coins 'paratexts' to describe and classify two kinds of phenomena. The first of these, which is my focus, is the peritext: all the signifying matter of the edition apart from the text. The contents pages of *Paratexts* suggests the range: formats, series, the name of the author, various kinds of title, dedications and inscriptions, epigraphs, prefaces and notes.[22] Epitexts, in contrast, are interviews with the author, publicity material such as catalogue copy, press releases, and authorial reviews (signed or unsigned), all of which are generated by the production apparatus. Epitexts are originally located outside the material form of the edition, though they may subsequently become peritextual.[23]

Paratext and text are defined in a relation of mutual dependence. The text:

> is rarely presented in an unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations. And although we do not always know whether these productions are to be regarded as belonging to the text, in any case they surround it and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption in the form (nowadays at least) of a book.[24]

Genette's aim is to resolve this classificatory uncertainty. The differentiation between text and peritext, he emphasises, is based on a theoretical abstraction: the reader never encounters the text, unadorned, though the extent and type of the paratextual apparatus varies. 'The heterogeneous group of practices and discourses' which together comprise the paratext share a specific function: to suggest ways of reading the text.[25] '[H]ow would we read Joyce's *Ulysses* if it were not entitled *Ulysses*?'.[26] Paratexts are therefore a particular kind of textual context. Genette figures paratexts within the locutions of speech act theory, as having illocutionary force, a force which whilst not necessarily syntactically marked, nevertheless seeks to direct the prescribed reader's reading of the text.[27] Thus the subtitle 'a novel' can function as a request to the reader to summon at least some of their expectations of the novelistic, for example

fictionality.[28] His treatment of paratexts is then broadly pragmatic: paratexts are messages with senders and implied receivers who are contextually located in time and space. The paratexts of a particular text may have a number of senders and prescribed receivers. Senders may include the author, an editor (in the case of an editor's introduction), a series editor, a reviewer (where review extracts are published as part of the blurb or in the prelims), or, in more general terms, a commentator. Genette also makes the crucial point that the different paratexts of a text may address very different implied audiences. The title, he argues, is addressed to the 'public' at large, many paratexts are addressed to the prescribed reader, some to a particular constituency of prescribed readers (one thinks here of the acknowledgements page).[29] Both sender and receiver are defined in relation to the text's temporal and spatial existence. The paratext may be contemporaneous with the text, or precede its circulation - as certain kinds of publicity material do - or succeed it - as in the case of new editions. A paratext may be located within or without the edition - the peritext/epitext distinction - but the peritext's location is also plotted according to its relative placing to the text: before it, within or after. Within these categories there is a further dimension of proximity: closer to or further away from the text. Paratext and text are also distinguished in terms of their relation to history:

> the paratext provides a kind of canal lock between the ideal and relatively immutable identity of the text and the empirical (socio-historical) reality of the text's public ... the lock permitting the two to remain 'level' ... Being immutable, the text in itself is incapable of adapting to changes in its public in space and over time. The paratext - more flexible, more versatile, always transitory because transitive - is, as it were, an instrument of adaptation.[30]

Whilst the text remains the same over time, in an idealised sense at least, the paratext is the means by which the text can be adapted to a socio-historically changing readership.

The richest and most suggestive aspect of *Paratexts* lies in the detailed examination of the text's peritextual features.[31] His elaboration of different peritexts and how these vary across genres, as well as historically and geographically (though the primary example is France), opens up a range of ways of thinking about how the epitextual apparatus functions to propose possible reading contexts. Particularly interesting, but also representative, is Genette's discussion of titles. Titles can obviously generate expectations about the text and function as strong interpretative and reading contexts.[32]

> There are titular styles peculiar to certain authors ... There are connotations of a historical kind: the classical dignity of generic titles, the romanticism (and post-romanticism) of parageneric titles, the eighteenth-century flavour of long narrative titles à la Defoe, the nineteenth-centuryish tradition of full names of heroes and heroines ...There are also genre connotations: the single name of the

> hero in tragedy ... , the name of the dramatised characteristic in comedy ..., the suffix *-ad(e)* or *-id(e)* in the titles of classical epics ... .[33]

Whilst Genette separates 'genre connotations' from 'connotations of a historical kind', it is clear that historical connotations can also establish generic expectations. The 'nineteenth-centuryish tradition' of hero and heroine titles - *Jane Eyre*, *Daniel Deronda*, *Thérèse Raquin*, *Anna Karenin* - may not only function as a marker of the historicity of the text for contemporary readers, but can also operate as a strong generic marker of the bildungsroman.

However his discussion of titling also exposes a general problem with the paratext. For Genette, titles are, of course, paratextual, and propose strong reading contexts. This is their defining attribute and what distinguishes them from the text is precisely their functionality. For Genette the text is 'dumb' ('tout à fait muette' - completely mute as to the matter of its own reading):

> The novel does not design itself explicitly as novel, nor the poem as a poem. At the limit, the determination of the generic status of the text is not its affair, but that of the reader, the critic, the public'.[34]

But how is it possible to ignore or resist the strong interpretative contexts that texts (as opposed to paratexts) propose? Generic markers are the most obvious and strongest case of interpretative contexts. The variety of conventions which form the introductions to so many academic articles and papers: 'In this paper I will argue', 'my aim is to demonstrate' etc., followed by a synopsis of the order that the text will follow is a clear example. These are evidently explicit directions for reading. In Gothic narratives, literal bad or unusual weather - violent storms, an unseasonable dark sky on a summer afternoon and so on - are often premonitors of dangerous supernatural events as well as markers of a disruption of the natural order. Within Gothic, such representations not only propose a specific kind of reading - symbolic and literal - but also propose particular kinds of narrative relation between what is happening and what will happen. The notion of a text that does not suggest its reading contexts is a fiction. This is a fundamental problem in Genette's accounts and derives from his limited conception of intertextuality as transtextuality, defined as:

> a relation of co-presence between two or more texts ... most frequently the effective presence of a text within an other.[35]

His definition of intertextuality always retains the sense of individual texts relating, one with another, and provides a strong contrast with Kristeva's 'permutation of texts'

where a simple plural dismisses the possibility of separable entities. For Genette, text is always a distinguishable unity.

Genette's commitment to unity is also the effect of a residual Romanticism. His differentiation of the 'public' ('the public in general - that is every Tom, Dick and Harry') here and elsewhere from the prescribed reader is instructive.[36] The term public has specific and derogatory meanings in Romantic discourse, often invoking a distinction between the serious reader and the marketised consumer.[37] The paratext does the utilitarian work of addressing an audience, of making public that which the silent text cannot and must not do. Further, whilst Genette elaborates the ways in which the peritextual apparatus of a single edition can have a complex historicity, incorporating prefaces or consolidating authorial and/or editorial notes written at different times, he does not recognise the complex historicity of the text as intertextuality. His conception of text is, at root, Romantic; a unified whole which in ideal terms can be separated from history and the market. The paratext is a threshold between text and world (history) but also, and equally importantly, a boundary which separates the utilitarian practices of the paratextual apparatus, from the text itself, which is not functional or instrumental.

This Romanticism is foregrounded in Genette's distinction between paratextual and other reading contexts. 'In principle', he suggests, 'every context serves as a paratext'.[38] A reader's knowledge of the age or gender of the author, her/his sexuality (one could add here her/his class, nationality or ethnicity), can all shape how the text is read.[39] The 'commonsense' axiom and complex mythology that all women's writing is experiential and autobiographical and that all black women's writing is doubly so, is an obvious case and may mobilise expectations and practices which weaken fictive expectations - about the meanings carried by narrative patterning for example. But whilst 'in principle' any context may serve as a paratext.

> By definition, something is not a paratext unless the author or one of his associates accepts responsibility for it, although the degree of responsibility may vary.[40]

This notion of responsibility is both literal and metaphorical. Literal, in the sense that a paratext may be officially signed by the author. Metaphorical because in much publication and almost all posthumous publication, the publisher can be seen as metaphorically enacting the authorial will, even if this will is defined rather abstractly as the authorial wish for the text to remain in circulation. Genette clearly recognises the possibility of disagreement between author and publisher and also of misinterpretations - including deliberate or wilful ones - of the presumed will of the author.[41] There is a clear parallel here with the role that traditional critical editing assigns to the author. And

it is interesting to note that the majority of engagements with *Paratexts* have been of a rather traditional, bibliographical and descriptive kind rather than with the pragmatic issues that Genette, raises, albeit in rather formal terms.[42] What distinguishes a paratextual context of interpretation from any other is its relation to authorial responsibility: strong or weak, literal or metaphorical. Within this definition, a review that is written by one of the author's 'associates' is an epitextual paratext, whilst a review written by someone who has no association with the author is just another reading context.

Genette's definition of publishing therefore has two elements. First, it is a process conceived as the author 'writ large'; second, it is a mediation, modification or 'adaptation' (his preferred lexeme) of the text to the changing demands of different reading constituencies. But to call this a 'definition' is a misnomer because publishing is nowhere explicitly conceptualised in *Paratexts*. (this is likewise the case in the 'new' critical editing). Genette's implicitly assumes that publishing is the enactment of the authorial will and always limits its role to modifying the text that always precedes it. McGann's position is more interesting in this respect: 'texts are produced and reproduced under specific social and institutional conditions' and all texts, even the most 'private', are social.[43] Publishing is not conceived here as the author 'writ large' but what is interesting is his locution: 'texts always stand within an editorial horizon' which McGann glosses as the horizon of the text's production and reproduction.[44] What is interesting about this formulation is the conjunction of vagueness and particularity. What does it mean for a text to 'stand' within this horizon? What exactly are the constitutive relations between text and horizon? And why the editorial horizon? This seems to define publishing predominantly as editing: editing becomes a metonym for publishing. In this at least, McGann is typical of the new textual studies.[45] More frequently the centrality of editing is proposed in deconstructive terms and the relations between composition and editing are reversed: David Greetham's suggestion that commentary goes 'on top' is one such instance, a metaphor which plays rather uneasily with conventional hierarchies of space and gender.[46] This rewriting of publishing as editing, of the totality of processes as one (or two if we include Greetham's subordinated composition) is once again not surprising given the objects of textual studies. The new textual studies attack on the old centres on editorial practice, and questions about other practices or processes and their relations are, in the main, subordinated to editing. But is editing always the dominant process in publishing? And is the 'editorial horizon' an adequate formulation of the text's location within publishing processes and institutions?

3. From editing and composition to the horizon of the publishable

In contrast I would argue that it is the horizon of the publishable which constitutes texts, writerships and readerships. Authors don't write books, as Roger E. Stoddard reminds us, they write and submit manuscripts (or nowadays disks and hard copies).[47] What governs the readable and the writable and their relations is what it is possible or plausible to publish in a given context. The horizon of the publishable is neither a singular category, nor an autonomous logic defined by the industry. The publishable is defined by the relations between publishing and other institutions: most obviously perhaps other media, but also, educational, cultural and legal ones. Second, within publishing, there is clearly a range of horizons of the publishable, some of which intersect with specific genres or categories. Others are not category-specific but are differently implemented within categories: celebrity publishing, of the kind where the author's name precedes and is unrelated to writing would be one case of this.

The publishable is clearly a complex and multiple horizon but it is precisely this complexity and multiplicity that give the publishable as a concept such strong explanatory value. For example, it becomes possible to systematically specify particular publishing categories in terms of the distinctive horizons which constitute them. Some of these are highly specific, for example the role of various educational institutions and discourses in constituting the horizon for children's publishing, or the role of the legal practices which organise the relations between publishers and museums and archives in the case of illustrated art books. Others have a much more extensive range and force. For example, the publishing horizon of many genres, from biography and autobiography through many categories of popular fiction, is increasingly shaped by the horizon of possibilities of other media. The publishable is increasingly required to be malleable, usable in a range of media forms: as tv adaptation or film, extractable or abridgeable for newspapers and magazines and so on. The case-studies explored in the analysis below are in a different way evidence of the central role of 'versioning' in publishing, as in all contemporary media. Such a characterisation is only possible if publishing is defined to include the totality of publishing processes: composition, editing, design, production, marketing and publicity.

This conceptualisation sees composition as one of the processes of publishing: it has its own specificity but it is not a practice of a different order, as Genette seems to assume. Nor can composition be understood as a process which precedes publishing: the matter that is modified or mediated by publishing processes. First, because within contemporary publishing (as in all modes of cultural production), the processes of production are frequently co-temporal. Books can be marketed and publicised before they are written or at least completed.[48] Second because, as noted above, the horizon

of the publishable itself constitutes what it is possible to write, and in significant terms, how it is written, edited, designed, produced and so on. Once more the picture becomes more complex and more theoretically productive. It becomes possible to differentiate publishing categories and genres in terms of the relations between processes and, in particular, to identify the dominant process in different types of publishing, a dominant which subordinates and transforms other processes. In literary and intellectual publishing, it is clear that the writer or author has greater freedom and sanction, and the compositional process a more constitutive role than in probably any other mode. (There is a certain irony in the fact that the various critiques of authorial intention have focused so much of their attention on a mode of publishing where the author has an a-typically important role) Celebrity publishing is an apparently paradoxical case, where composition and all other processes are subordinated to marketing and publicity. It is not simply that the celebrity signature is no guarantee of authorship. What the name inscribes is not the dominance of composition but of marketing. Illustrated books, as a general category, make a particular conjunction of design and production the dominant. Specifying the relations between processes within different types of publishing also makes it possible to differentiate processes - such as editing, design, marketing and so on - in relation to particular categories of publication: as practices. Clearly, the editing practices of classics are very different to those of contemporary literary publishing. An obvious difference is the visibility of editorial practice in the former, where particular choices are explicitly represented and explained (for example in terms of printer or authorial error) and its invisibility in the latter.

Such an understanding of processes and practices opens up a different way of thinking about genre in relation to books. Different genres can be explored and defined in terms of both a dominant publishing process and a set of specific practices. This characterisation of publishing, which takes account of both its institutional dimensions and relations, and its processes - their relations and instantiation as practices in the constitution of particular publishing categories, is necessary if its role in interpretation is to be assessed. It suggests a different way of theorising the edition, not merely as the material form in which the reader encounters the text but as the intersection and instantiation of production (publishing) practices. This in turn suggests a different way of defining and formulating the relations between text and edition. Text is anything which the author either consents to sign or which is signed on behalf of the author, most usually by an editor (e.g. the posthumous publication of letters, diaries etc.). This definition is author-centred only in so far as the author is a legal entity contractually constituted by copyright. The text may be co-written with an editor, who may compose more of the text than the author does but the manuscript (for this

definition of text is largely co-extensive with the manuscript) is published under the signature of the author. The author may write the jacket blurb and/or play an important role in the design of the cover but these texts are not signed by the author. The title however is frequently signed by the author. The text, defined in this sense, does not correspond to a time anterior to publication or publishing processes, nor does it demarcate an object which exists outside of publication.

In defining the text in this way, my aim is to identify an extant material object - one always-already structured by the variable horizons of the publishable - which enters into a set of relations with various institutionalised practices which transform it. This definition of text as that which is signed can also further the differentiation of the practices of media institutions and to some extent genres. In the case of much print journalism, the signed text may have been extensively subbed with little or no authorial involvement. In the case of literary fiction and many genres of intellectual writing, negotiations between author and editors may be extensive, with the author retaining the right to veto editorial suggestions. House styles (ranging from preferred spelling to prescribed narrative conventions) as well as editorial instruction and discussions can significantly structure compositional practice. It should be clear that the reader of the book, article and so on never encounters the text as it is defined above, although that is often precisely the object that readers think they are encountering. By edition I mean the material form that the reader encounters and/or reads. The edition is the final transformation of the 'text': it therefore includes the text rather than treating it as separable. This distinction captures, in ways which Genette's text-paratext formula does not, the reader's relation to the edition. For example, the reader often treats the author as the signatory of the title and intertitles. And if the author is a legitimising concept for the reader, this may encourage the reader to treat such titles as strong contexts. This may in turn lead to the weakening of other non-authorially sanctioned contexts.

The edition itself is intertextual in distinctive ways. Genette correctly recognises that the editional apparatus is fundamentally metatextual. Titles, blurbs, prefaces, introductions, indexes and notes are all texts which 'speak about' the text: comment upon it, represent it, read it. But to conceive this metatextual function exclusively as textual commentary is too narrow. To represent Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* as '[o]ne of the most perfect, most pleasurable and most subtle - and therefore, perhaps, most dangerously persuasive - of romantic love stories' does indeed represent the text but it also represents the text as an instance of a particular genre which may function as an interpretative or reading context.[49] The relation is reciprocal: to classify this text as romance also contributes to a definition of romance.

This reciprocal relation requires consideration if the horizon of the publishable and its role in the production of genre is to be kept in the frame of the analysis.

What Genette does not acknowledge, given his limiting definition as intertextuality as transtextuality, is that 'paratexts', like any other text are always-already intertextual whether or not they are explicitly metatextual. (All modalities of intertextuality are metatextual, given that any text always takes up a position to the texts, genres, languages which it varies, even if there are differing degrees of explicitness) Whilst making the valuable point that different paratexts may have different addressees, he cannot conceive the potentially multiple addressees of any one paratext: the multiplicity that marks the various permutations of the text as texts. A key focus of chapter six is the ways in which the same text may prescribe different and conflicting readerships, whose knowledges are incompatible. This, in turn, marks a more general feature of the editional apparatus, where conflicting interpretative and reading contexts are proposed both within particular metatexts and across them.

Beyond this, editing, design and production are all signifying practices and as such they are all intertextual. But the 'moment' of signification varies across practices. Meaning-making is clearly central to editing and this is why it is so central in the analysis that follows. The same is not true of pricing. Price can and does signify: the first Wordsworth classics editions which sold for £1.00, also included the legend 'complete and unabridged' on the front cover, as if the relative cheapness (as compared with other classics editions) might suggest a cost-cutting which including the cutting of the novel. But such meanings are an instantiation of a process not centrally governed by meaning-making. Production practices are then intertextual to the extent that they signify.

4. The case-studies

Given the multifarious modes of intertextuality, I will limit my analysis to three overlapping practices, each of which provide rich opportunities to explore genre, discourse and their relations. I will note them here and elaborate them in further detail in chapters five and six. The first is classification: the various categorisations of the text within the edition and the intertextual relations configured by these. Classification is the focus of chapter five. In chapter six, I will examine the practices of translation and topicalisation. Translation is, as suggested above, the transposition of an utterance from one language into another or others, where a language is conceived in Bakhtinian terms (most of the translations examined are intra-linguistic). Topicalisation is the practice which produces and reproduces topoi, where a topos is understood as an established mode and matter of argument. Each of these has relations with the practices

codified by classical rhetoric. The rhetorical emphasis, part of the common ground shared by intertextual and inferential theories, is intended to convey the situation and purpose-bound character of such practices and the ways in which they constitute arguments; topicalisation is clearly pertinent to the goal of mapping possible inferential procedures and their discursively governed character.

My two case studies, classics and academic textbooks in literary theory - Readers and Introductions - are considered here as publishing categories. Both typify the contemporary practice, common across all media and a staple of many genres, of versioning or re-versioning the 'same' text. Classics and academic textbooks recontextualise texts in new editional contexts, addressing different constituencies of readers. More specifically, the horizon of the publishable of both categories overlap; higher educational institutions, practices and personnel play an important role in each - an issue to which I will return. Further, both classics and textbooks re-present or version texts which are assumed to raise specific interpretative difficulties for the prescribed readerships. Much of the editional apparatus of classics is seemingly warranted by just such an assumption (endnotes would be one obvious case). Academic textbooks likewise recognise the interpretative difficulties of the re-versioned texts and the rendering of the difficult text in more accessible form is a staple of 'Introductions to'.

The two case-studies are also contrastive. In the case of the classic, the text is reproduced with little or no variation, the differences are substantively editional. In the case of Readers, however, the texts are frequently abridged, so the differences between versions are both textual and editional. Academic 'Introductions to' also reversion extant texts, though the practices of reproduction and variation are different. Varieties of direct, indirect and free indirect speech or writing are the predominant modes of representing the extant text - a practice shared with the introductory materials of Readers. The case studies also differ insofar as they reflect the development of the mode of intertextual analysis. In chapter five, my focus is not on 'texts' (in the special sense identified above) but on the editional apparatus and the interpretative and reading practices it proposes. In chapter six, my focus is expanded to take account of the relations between 'textual' and editional practices. Finally, classics and textbooks organise the three modalities of reading (interpretation, explanation and evaluation) in very different ways with, it will be seen, very different effects. As both case-studies will demonstrate, we do not simply first interpret, then explicate and finally evaluate: evaluation and/or explication may precede interpretation.

In this chapter, I have outlined the terms, conditions and goals of a mode of intertextual analysis which will be developed through the two case-studies. The framework of concepts draws on the strengths of intertextual and inferential approaches

but also seeks to remedy their individual and shared weaknesses, in particular the way both traditions ignore the edition as a central condition of reading. I have also shown that contemporary accounts of the 'book' and the practices which constitute it do not adequately theorise these and their relations with interpretation and reading. My alternative, 'the horizon of the publishable' is a concept which situates the particular act of reading in both broad and local contexts and delineates some of the central relations between the key concepts defined here: genre and discourse, process and practice, reader and conditions of reading, text and edition.

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[1] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

[2] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980). See in particular, on order, p.35; on frequency, pp.87-88; and on duration pp. 114-116. Two issues are relevant here. First, the relations Genette identifies are textual: there is no 'natural' order of events which contrasts with the order of telling: both are effects of the text, of the relations between diegesis and narrative. Likewise there is no natural speed or duration: even dialogue, which comes closest, Genette argues, does not represent the speed of 'real' conversation as it cannot represent its pacing. The second issue is that Genette's account of narrative is not, of course, intertextual; nor is he, strictly speaking, interested in genre. Although he discusses realism (which I would classify as a genre) he treats it more generally as a mode of narration. That said, it is clear that his definition of narrative can be recast in intertextual terms, particularly with respect to genres which have particular and specifiable orders, durations and frequencies. To take a very simple example, the discovery of a body at the beginning of much detective fiction presumes a death and most usually a murder (however disguised) and one of the key ordering strategies of such texts is the reconstruction of the events that precede the discovery which places the beginning of the narrative as some kind of mid-point of the story.

[3] The texts I have in mind here are *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), and 'The Order of Discourse' in *Untying the Text*, edited by Robert Young. It therefore forms part of what is now represented as the archaeological phase of Foucault's thought, defined in *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage, 1973), as 'an inquiry whose aim is to rediscover on what basis knowledge and theory became possible' (pp.xxi-xxii). On archaeology versus genealogy see for

example, Hubert L. Drefus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Brighton: Harvester, 1982), and C. G. Prado, *Starting with Foucault* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995). The citation in the body text is taken from Chartier's text, 'Intellectual History/ History of Mentalités' in *Cultural History: Between Practice and Representation* . This is not in fact a text 'about' Foucault as such and in fact the citation is taken from a discussion of Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloc and 'the first Annales generation' (pp.21-27). The text does however locate a very valuable trajectory and set of contexts in which to locate Foucault's writing and Foucault (and Bourdieu) are clearly viewed as inheritors and transformers of this 'tradition': 'After Foucault, it is quite clear that we cannot consider ... 'intellectual objects' as akin to 'natural objects' that change only in their modes of existence through history. Madness, medicine and the state are not categories that can be conceptualised in terms of universals: every age makes their content unique.' (p.47).

[4] I am thinking here of the way in which discourse often seems to function in Foucault's writings as wholly autonomous and self-regulating, a formulation clarified by a contrast with the way he formulates ideology. In an interview entitled 'Truth and Power' in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, edited by Colin Gordon (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), Foucault says that he finds ideology 'difficult to make use of' in important part because it posits an alternative and singular concept of truth, and because ideology 'stands in a secondary position relative to something which functions as its infrastructure, as its material, economic determinant etc.' Both arguments appear to me to be problematic. Barthes's formulation of ideology in 'Myth Today' which defines the 'myth' as both unreal and true (in its force and effects) is clearly not limited in this sense. Foucault's infrastructure (or base) superstructure argument depends on a narrow formulation of economy or the economic which is by no means the only reading of 'mode of production'.

[5] And with very different effects. In Elixabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, (1848), (London: Penguin, 1996) for example, the scientific authority of physiognomy is both acknowledged and challenged. An amateur physiognomist's evaluation of Jem Wilson when he comes to trial for a murder he did not commit convicts him; but this discourse is immediately contested as the knowledge of a stranger: 'Poor Jem! His raven hair (his mother's pride, and so often fondly caressed by her fingers), was that

too, to have its influence against him? Local, traditional or, here, family knowledges are valued over the modern, impersonal knowledges of the stranger.

[6] T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards The Definition of Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948). Ruth Rendell, *Judgement in Stone* (London: Arrow, 1978).

[7] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847) (London, Penguin Popular Classics, 1994).

[8] James Cameron (Director), *Titanic* (US: 20th Century Fox, 1997). Rose's definitive break with her family and fiancé are key markers of this freedom. Literally she chooses meritocracy over aristocracy and privilege which are closely identified with patriarchy and oppression. Rose renames herself Rose Dawson as she arrives in New York, and although she is already an American citizen (returning to the States), she takes on something of an immigrant identity: making herself anew and successfully. The fact that she is American and the privilege that she rejects is likewise is a register of the film's conservatism. Rose (and Jack) may be definitively modern but they are only reclaiming the right to the dream which has been corrupted by others.

[10] William Proctor Williams and Craig S. Abbott, *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies* (New York: Modern Languages Association of America, 1989). The book offers a very useful summary of the fields and practices encompassed by Bibliography and Textual Studies and their relations.

[11] Jerome McGann, 'The Case of the Ambassadors and the Textual Condition' in *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities* edited by George Bornstein and Ralph G Williams (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), p.152.

[12] Williams and Abbot provide a useful if somewhat innocent summary of this process in their discussion of critical editing (a set of processes which produces a new text based on the evidence and interpretation of several documents, or versions of the text, together with various editorial emendations) The result is conceived as the realisation of a modal version of authorial intention: what the author would have wanted. See in particular p.58.

[13] Bornstein, 'Introduction', *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities*, pp.1-8, p.2.

[14] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (composed 1600-1 approx.). The solid / sullied (sallied) crux is something of a topos. The Signet Classic Shakespeare edition for example, prints 'sullied' with the following footnote: 'Q2 has sallied, here modernised to sullied, which makes sense and is therefore given; but the Folio Reading, solid, which fits better with melt ['O that this too too solid flesh would melt'], is quite possibly correct' (New York: Signet Classic, 1963), p.44.

[15] Jerome McGann's on-line Rosetti Archive is at www.iath.virginia.edu/rosetti/index.html.

[16] Bornstein, *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanties*, p.3.

[17] Philip Cohen, 'Introduction' in *Devils and Angels: Textual Editing and Literary Theory*, edited by Philip Cohen (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), p.xvii.

[18] Jerome McGann, 'The Monks and the Giants' in *Textual Criticism and Literary Interpretation* edited by McGann (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1985), pp181-199.

[19] On the awkwardness that this desire for a moderate middle ground can generate see for example, Ralph G. Williams, 'I Shall Be Spoken: Textual Boundaries, Authors and Intent' in *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities,* pp.45-66. Here he asserts both the intertextualities of the text (though in rather narrow terms) and the need to treat the author, albeit understood as a convention, as 'one of the determinants of the text' (pp.49 - 62). He does not however consider what an intertextual concept of the author might look like. The same middle ground can also generate somewhat dissonant defences of traditional practice. For example Clayton Delery in 'The Subject Presumed to Know', *Text: Transactions of the Society for Textual Scholarship* 5, (1991), pp.63-80. Delery argues in a Lacanian vein that facsimile or diplomatic editions are the most authoritative (in terms of their representations of the multiple versions of the text) and the least phallic because no flaw, error or disruption is veiled: they are editions with holes. By contrast, most critical editions seek to veil or cover up the holes and the editor's authority goes unquestioned.

[20] Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997). It was originally published in French as *Seuils* by Editions du Seuil in 1987; 'seuil' has the figurative sense of threshold as well as alluding to the publisher. On Genette's definition of intertextuality and his pragmatic approach, see below.

[21] Whilst *Paratexts* is unique in respect of its range and generality, Genette's many references to other writers and texts furnish evidence of a wide range of interests in the book and the edition, from Philippe Lejeune's *Le Pacte Autobiographique* (Paris: Seuil, 1975) whom Genette cites in the introduction (pp.2-3) to Claude Duchet 'who gave the name titology [French titrologie after "titre", the word for title] to this little discipline, which to date is the active of all the disciplines - if any - concerned with studying the paratext.' A half-page of references follows (p.55).

[22] *Paratexts*, pp.vii-x.

[23] *Paratexts*, p.344.

[24] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.1

[25] I will use the term 'reading' rather than interpretation when I am discussing Genette's arguments because I want to distinguish his usage of reading (which is not specified) from the particular sense of interpretation which I am trying to develop here.

[26] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.2.

[27] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp.10-12.

[28] The subtitle 'a novel' may also act to counter expectations suggested by the title. A constructed example: *1789: A Novel.*

[29] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp.8-9.

[30] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.408.

[31] The detailed inventory of the form and function of paratexts and their relations occupies the greater part of the book. The epitext is dispatched in just under sixty pages, on the grounds that epitextual reading contexts, such as authorial interviews and other autobiographica, are conventionally accepted as discourses which explicate and provide reading contexts for the text (p.347).

[32] Titles are discussed on pp.55-104. Titles are also interesting in that in certain situations the meaning of a title can be redundant. In certain situation indeed their very meaning can be completely demobilised: 'When I ask a bookseller, "Do you have *Le Rouge et le Noir*?" ... the meaning attached to this title ... counts for nothing' (*Paratexts* , p.80). In situations such as these, the title functions in the same way as a certain type of brand name, the 'opacity' of which cancels extant semantic possibilities. Car names are a classic example here: Jaguar, Mini, Ford.

[33] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.90.

[34] Gerard Genette, *Palimpsestes: La Littérature au Second Degré* (Paris: Editions du Seuils, 1982), p.12, my translation.

[35] Genette, *Palimpsestes*, p.8, my translation.

[36] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.9

[37] Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society*, pp.50-2. The coupling of structuralist commitments with a Romantic conception of text is not in itself surprising: the unity proposed by structurally governed relations of meaning can function to reinscribe the organic unity that underscores the Romantic conception of text. But it is surprising in Genette's case, given that *The Architext* is an explicit critique of the way that Romanticism has distorted the classical definition of genre in terms of who speaks: Genette, *The Architext: An Introduction* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), see in particular p.2 and pp.36-44.

[38] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.8

[39] 'For example, most readers of *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* are aware of the two biographical facts of Proust's part-Jewish ancestry and his homosexuality. Knowledge of those two facts inevitably serves as a paratext to the pages of Proust's work that deal with those two subjects (*Paratexts*, p.8).

[40] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.9.

[41] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.347.

[42] This traditional bibliographical focus also seems to be a popular way of treating the concept of paratexts. See for example Mireille Hilsum, 'Le Préface Tardive D'Aragon pour les Oeuvres Romanesques Croisées' in *Poetique* 69 (1987), pp.45-60, a special issue on the paratext. The article explores the joint republication of many of Louis Aragon's and Elsa Triolet's writings and the new intertitles which sequenced them, an interesting case-study but the focus is bibliographical: how the edition came to be. What is also interesting is that the article is almost exclusively concerned with the author's contribution to the edition. What is also interesting is that despite Genette's commitment to viewing the paratextual apparatus in pragmatic terms, he volunteers no elaborations of the interpretative possibilities proposed by the multiple peritextual examples he instances.

[43] Jerome McGann, 'Literary Pragmatics and the Editorial Horizon' in *Devils and Angels: Textual Editing and Literary Theory* edited by Philip Cohen, p.2.

[44] McGann, 'Literary Pragmatics', p.3, my emphasis.

[45] Whilst editing practices are the main focus, this is not to say there is no interest in other production processes meaning-bearing. D. F. McKenzie is one 'big' bibliographer ('big bibliography' is his term) who argues that bibliography or sociology of text should encompass the study of the meanings produced by all publishing processes. See for example his *Bibliography of the Sociology of Texts: The Panizzi Lectures 1985* (London: British Library 1986). In 'Communities of Readers' in The *Order of Books*, Chartier discusses McKenzie's studies of how shifts in the design conventions of printing plays ('moving from a quarto to an octavo edition, numbering scenes ... recalling the names of characters present at the beginning of each scene, marginal indications of the name of the character speaking') created a new readability which 'reproduced within the book something of the movement of the staging' (pp.10-11).

[46] D. C. Greetham, 'Editorial and Critical Theory: From Modernism to Postmodernism' in *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities* edited by Bornstein and Williams, pp. 9-28.

[47] Roger E. Stoddard, 'Morphology and the Book from an American Perspective', *Printing History* 17 (1990), pp.2-24, cited in Roger Chartier, 'Communities of Readers' in *The Order of Books*, p.9.

[48] Thomas Harris's *Hannibal*, (London: Arrow, 2000), his sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs* is a canonical instance of this.

[49] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Penguin, 1996), back cover blurb. This example will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: The Case of Classics

> 'The classics are the books of which we usually hear people say, 'I am rereading ... " and never 'I am reading ... ' (Italo Calvino)[1]

1. What is a classic?

Diversity is the most visible hallmark of the texts published as classic. The range of titles published by Penguin, the institution most associated with classics in Britain, is indicative of this: works originally composed in English and numerous translations; prose, drama and poetry; philosophical, auto /biographical, scientific and political texts as well as the more familiar fiction; a historical span from Plato to Bellow; texts whose value is definitively established and those whose reputation is recent and/or seemingly precarious.[2] As the last suggests, the classic is not a category whose contents are fixed and finite. My focus here is on fiction, a particular type of classic constituted by distinctive practices and representations. The choice is aimed partly to contrast with chapter six, but also because fiction is a site where multiple interpretative possibilities are acknowledged (though this acknowledgement is often provisional), and where the question of the relative strength of these possibilities, their graduated contingency, is fundamental. Within this category I am examining what might be termed the unmodified classic, not 'modern' or 'twentieth-century' or 'contemporary' classics but the default classic with its immediate accent of longevity and association with the past. This longevity is intimately bound with its proposed value - its perdurance is precisely a marker of its worth - and with specifically interpretative issues: the gap between the 'then' of original publication and the 'now' of this contemporary may present difficulties for the prescribed reader. Indeed the classic as publishing category is structured around a contradiction that is conditioned by this defining longevity. On the one hand, the practices of classics publishing participate in reproducing the commonsense definition of the classic as a text which has enduring relevance: it is defined as universally intelligible (not only in the transience of 'the now' but in any imaginable time, past or future). On the other this definition is accompanied by procedures which recognise that some of the classic's meanings and values are opaque because distant from us.

The classic has of course been defined in literary-critical discourse, most famously perhaps by T. S. Eliot as a conjunction between a mature mind and a mature culture.[3] In contemporary publishing discourse, 'a book that is out of copyright' is one popular half-joking and unattributed definition. The juxtaposition clearly foregrounds a discrepancy between literary-critical and industry discourses and the classic as publishing category is clearly not identical with definitions of the 'Literary'. It does however participate in a number of its familiar discourses. Both continuity and

discrepancy are strongly marked in the choice of case-study: Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* , first published in 1813. The literary value of Austen's writing, with the possible exception of *Northanger Abbey* , is uncontested.[4] And Austen is definitively an 'author' in the terms defined by Foucault.[5] But her writing, and *Pride and Prejudice* in particular, ~~are~~ is also popular. The recent spate of television and film adaptations, sequels, and elaborately constructed and highly active Austen websites (many of which incorporate carefully regulated terms and conditions for writing fan fiction) all attest this.[6] Austen, like Charles Dickens, and unlike Henry James, is , in important ways, constituted as classic because of her proposed popularity with (generations of) readers. This double figuration of Austen and her writing as both Literary and popular makes editions of *Pride and Prejudice* particularly interesting because the two categories preclude and significantly define each other and suggest very different reading and interpretative practices.

There are numerous editions of the novel in print, but not all of these constitute the novel as classic and my choice of editions reflects this. The Penguin 1995 edition does not publish *Pride and Prejudice* as classic (I will substantiate this point below) but it contrastively focuses the specificity of classics publishing. The other three editions do constitute the novel as classic. Two of these, the Everyman 1993 edition and the Penguin 1996, have an extensive editional apparatus, incorporating not only introductions and notes, but chronologies of Austen's 'Life and Times', plot summaries, and synoptic accounts of Austen criticism. The only hardback edition is published by the Folio Society. Here the textual apparatus of the edition is minimal (there is only an introduction) and the high 'production values', including specially commissioned illustrations, contribute strongly to the inscription of the text's classic status.[7] Taken together, the choice suggests the variety of classics publishing in contemporary Britain. One of the most visible differences is price. The Folio Society edition costs £16.00 but is also available as part of a boxed set, comprising all Austen's novels, novel 'fragments' and juvenilia, which costs £112.00. By contrast, the Penguin 1996 paperback retails for £2.50. The presence of the two Penguin editions represents another increasingly general practice of the major classics publishers - Oxford, Everyman and Penguin - who publish more than one edition of the same novel, addressing different readerships, for example student and 'general'. This attempt to synergise the product is also reflected in the 'non-classic' edition considered here: the Penguin 1995 edition is the official tie-in with the BBC television adaptation from the same year. Another contemporary edition, the Sceptre paperback, also references the television series on the front cover and ties the novel to two recently published 'sequels' by Emma Tennant - *Pemberley* and *An Unequal Marriage* - also published by Sceptre.[8] These differences of publishing practice obviously intersect

with the primary focus of this analysis: the intertextual locations produced by the classifications of each edition and the interpretative possibilities suggested by them.

The various editions of the novel abound in classifications of the novel which are textualised in very different ways: as single lexemes, for example on the back covers - 'Fiction' (the 1995 Penguin), 'Literature' (the 1996 Penguin) - but also in more complex formulations which range from simple noun phrases - 'Jane Austen's best-loved work' (1995 Penguin) - to more extended and elaborate formulations - 'one of the enduring classics of English literature' (1995 Sceptre), and indeed whole arguments and texts, such as blurbs and introductions. Each of the classifications above both defines the novel and proposes arguments about it. 'One of the enduring classics of English Literature' is a complex and hyperbolic act of classification: the text is a member of the class of literary texts, but also of a national sub-class of Literature, a sub-class of the classic (a sub-sub class of the enduring classic?).[9] But the classification simultaneously proposes and presupposes a set of arguments: Pride and Prejudice is 'one of the ...'; there is a category English Literature, and so on. Here the latter is masked by the textual form of the classification: the title is lexically substituted by a noun phrase which defines it in relation to other texts of its type. In classical rhetoric, definition is frequently codified as a central practice of inventio, 'the finding of discovering of material pertinent to the cause', and classifications, constituting the subject matter in terms of its 'species' or 'genus', is one of its modes.[10] Within the generality of classificatory definition, the figure of renaming or antonomasia is a particularly interesting case. 'Jane Austen's best-loved novel' is another name for *Pride and Prejudice*. The novel is categorised as one of Austen's - a closed set of six with the exception of the ambiguous *Sanditon*, completed by 'another Lady' - which the author as concept makes possible. However it is the particularity of *Pride and Prejudice* that is most strongly marked within this set, distinguished on the grounds of the emotion it has inspired in its readers. This invocation of rhetoric is intended to capture the situationally-constituted character of such representations and their argument patterns. Therefore whilst 'Jane Austen's best-loved work' is a strict case of lexical substitution, antonomasia is my preferred locution.[11] However these concepts are conceived in intertextual terms, terms which are clearly incompatible with the assumptions of classical rhetoric. First, there will be no attempt here to bind particular forms to particular functions. The purpose of antonomasia may on particular occasion be euphemism, or hinting without stating or amplification but such purposes and effects are multiple and variable according to the textual context which the figure inhabits. Likewise, one of the strongest assumptions of rhetoric is a form/content dichotomy, suggested, perhaps most strongly by elocutio, the fitting of language to audience and context, a faculty separated from both inventio and dispositio (the arrangement of material and most specifically its sequence), and assuming a core of

meaning which can be reversioned without any substantive change to sense.[12] Whilst this distinction is interestingly compatible with Sperber and Wilson's account of the interpretative dimensions of the language use and in particular resemblance, it is not compatible with intertextual accounts. My aim is not to rediscover rhetoric as always-already intertextual as a theory of language practice but to characterise and specify some of the many modes of being intertextual.

2. Descriptions

The paragraphs below provide a paratextual description of each of these editions to serve as a basis for the analysis that follows. Colour photocopies of the covers are appended.[13] All text is black out of white unless otherwise stated. Titles and the names of author and publisher are capitalised unless otherwise noted. Body text is upper and lower case unless otherwise noted.

The front cover of the Everyman 1993 paperback edition of *Pride and Prejudice* comprises a colour reproduction of an early nineteenth century painting - a detail - of two young women with their arms around each other's shoulders.[14] The publisher's logo and name, the title and the author are overlaid on the painting in a dark blue box, white framed, towards the bottom right of the cover. The spine, from top to bottom, prints the title and the author vertically with the logo in between. This combination of dark blue and white is reproduced on the spine and on the back cover. The back cover names the writer of the introduction and the textual editor beneath a publisher, title and author sequence. Below this is a blurb of twelve lines and a note summarising the editional apparatus. Beneath this is the provenance for the cover illustration. In the bottom left and right hand corners respectively are the price (in the UK £2.99, USA $3.95 and Canada $5.99) and the bar code, which is blue text out of white. The prelims are extensive. The first page reproduces the Everyman logo and motto and the second comprises a sixteen-line history and declaration of aims of the Everyman library.[15] After this comes the title page, which also reproduces the names of the editor and the writer of the introduction, the biblio page (the publishing history is recorded from the first Everyman edition of 1906) and a content's page where the novel's title marks the division between two sets of editional apparatus. Before the novel: a page supplying a biographical note on the author (eighteen lines), the editor (five lines), the writer of the introduction (six lines) in that order; a 'Chronology of Jane Austen's Life and Times': given as a double page spread with three columns under the headings of 'life', 'literary context' and 'historical context'; an introduction without notes of just over eighteen pages; and a note on the publishing history of the text. The novel follows. It is divided into chapters (arabic numbered), running from one to sixty one, a total of 292 pages. The original three-volume format chapter

sequence is not reproduced. After the text: four pages of notes to the text; a thirteen-page resumé of Austen criticism from first reviews to 1986; suggestions for further reading under the headings of 'reference', 'biography' and 'criticism' of one and a half pages alphabetically arranged; a chapter-by-chapter text summary of just under five pages, and finally an acknowledgements page listing the permissions granted for the reproduction of the critical extracts. The extensive editorial apparatus immediately suggests a prescribed reading constituency of students. The chapter-by-chapter summary (for example, chapter five: 'Mrs Bennet and her daughters are visited by their neighbours the Lucases. They discuss the ball and the proud Mr Darcy'[16]) is the single strongest piece of evidence for this and the chronology, summary of Austen criticism, suggestions for further reading, endnotes, and the blurb's listing of these features seem to confirm it. However, this inscription of a student readership is in part offset by two features.[17] The renumbering of the chapters which negates the three-volume form of the original and the introduction, which has no notes and makes no explicit reference to any Austen criticism.

The Folio Society's hardback 1957 edition provides an interesting contrast both in its editional apparatus and the prescribed readership. The only text on the cover, in gold lettering, is on the spine: at the top, the author's name followed by the title, at the bottom, the publisher's name. All text runs horizontally and in between are a series of small stylised images: a flower, a harp and a fan, each bounded by a narrow band. The text and images are gold on a grey cloth binding which extends about an inch onto the front and back boards. The rest of the cover is paper-bound and salmon pink with a small, regular leaf motif of a deeper browny red. The first printed page reproduces the text's title. The full title page includes the names of the writer of the introduction and the illustrator as well as the text's title, the names of the author and publisher, and the date and place of publication. The text is italicised and bounded by a small patterned black border. On the accompanying page, framed by the same border is a wood-cut style illustration of a man and women in early-nineteenth century costume who stand facing each other in the foreground; a house, partly obscured by foliage, occupies the background. The biblio page refers only to the first Folio Society publication in 1957, but also thanks Oxford University Press for their permission to print the Chapman edition.[18] On the facing page, the first of the five pages of introduction. A 'Select Bibliography' of six titles occupies the following page and the novel begins on the next. The novel, which runs to 308 pages is divided into the original three volumes which are numbered in roman; the chapters are in arabic. Each chapter heading is decorated with a horizontal band of a leaf motif. There are sixteen illustrations within the body of the novel, not regularly spaced.[19] Some represent specific points in the narrative - Mr Collin's proposal to Elizabeth Bennet, Elizabeth's surprise encounter with Mr Darcy at Pemberley - others are generic and do not correspond to particular

moments in the text - a group of four young women (presumably all but one of the Bennet sisters) in a bedroom, where one is dressing another's hair.[20] The endlims are blank apart from the page immediately following the last page of the novel, which details the typeface, point-size, leading, the type of paper and cloth, and acknowledges the illustrator as the book designer. Is this edition meant to be read? This must be one of the first questions that it provokes. The weight and size of the book seem to deter reading. And the solidity itself belies fragility: the easily stainable fabric binding suggesting perhaps that the best place for the book is in the slip case with the others. The design of the book, in particular the chapter decorations and the illustrations, seems to propose it as an object to be looked at and admired, rather than read. The book's classification as an art object are confirmed by the acknowledgements which suggest an artisanal item. Its status as a commodity is minimised: there is no bar code and the price appears nowhere within the edition. The implied purchaser is necessarily limited to members of the Folio Society bookclub, a 'membership' which requires a minimum outlay of approximately £80 per year for a minimum of four titles.[21] The membership is addressed through a catalogue which is published annually and supplemented with updates. However the 'complete Austen' has often been advertised as a special offer or free gift to new members, suggesting the enduring attraction of Austen to members and potential members.

The Penguin /BBC 1995 television tie-in edition suggests a very different kind of appeal. The front cover comprises a full page four-colour photographic image of the two stars of the 1995 television adaptation, Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth, in character in a rural setting. At the top of the jacket, a small Penguin logo (an orange oval with a stylised black and white Penguin) is ranged left and the author's name in large white letters is ranged right. The title, in matte gold with red decoration, occupies most of the bottom third of the cover. Beneath the title is the legend: 'The award-winning BBC Television adaptation'. The spine on the text runs vertically: author (white), title (gold), ISBN (white) and logo. The back jacket comprises, in the following order, the blurb, which covers just under half a page; an advertisement for a book about the making of the series (*The Making of Pride and Prejudice*, co-published by Penguin and the BBC), a provenance for the photograph which identifies the actors and their characters, and the credits for the other major production roles in the television series.[22] All text is white out of black. A white band at the bottom of the page reproduces the logo and the classification, 'fiction', to the right with the price beneath (£2.99 UK, $9.95 Aust.) and the bar code to the right in black. The first page of the prelims consists of a twenty two-line biography of the author. The next page is blank with the title page (author, title, publisher and logo) following. Next the biblio page which notes the date of first publication and this Penguin edition - no other history is recorded - and its status as a tie-in. After this the text which runs to 346 pages, an

indication (when compared with the identically formatted Everyman and the larger formatted Folio) of the larger point size of this edition. One blank page follows. The most obvious feature is the dominance of the tv series. The front cover text is organised around the photograph of the two actors; and the text design of the title strongly alludes to the television series's titling. The text below the title - 'The award-winning BBC Television adaptation' - is not a modifier of the edition: this is not a video or screenplay. Rather it seems to fix the title far more strongly to the adaptation than to the author. An assumed familiarity with the series is employed as a mode of address to potential purchasers and readers. What is also noticeable is minimal editorial apparatus: there is neither an introduction nor endnotes.

The second Penguin edition, published in 1996, offers a strong contrast. The front cover is divided into three parts: a cream border which acts as a frame for both the text and illustration. This box is divided into two. At the top, a rectangular black box in which are printed the publisher and series (classics) separated by the Penguin logo, the author's name and the title in white out of black. Within this three-element sequence, the author's name and title are more closely connected, sharing the same point size and emboldened style. This occupies just over a quarter of the space. The rest of the cover is occupied by an illustration of a medieval stone gateway and an array of small, period, predominantly rurally-dressed figures in the foreground. A white out of black circular sticker marks the price (£2.50) and reproduces the publisher with the legend, 'quality and value'. On the spine at the top, a narrow red box, followed by the author's name and title printed vertically. At the bottom of the spine are the ISBN and the logo. On the back cover the conjunction of publisher, logo, author and title is reproduced at the top of the page in the same sequence and format as on the front cover. All text is black out of cream, the same colour which frames the front-cover illustration. The text on the back cover is reproduced in the following sequence: accreditation of the editor and writer of the introduction (the same person), an attributed quotation by Austen, the blurb, a provenance for the front cover illustration. At the bottom of the page, on the left, the publisher's logo, title and publisher's classification, formatted in the same way as the other Penguin edition, with one exception: the classification is 'literature' (not fiction). Below this the price (UK £2.50, CAN. $5.99, U.S.A $7.99). On the right is the bar code and ISBN.

As in the Everyman edition, the prelims are extensive. On the first page, the publisher, series and title are reproduced. This is followed by a twenty one-line biography of Austen, a five-line biography of the editor (who is also the writer of the introduction) and a mention for the 'textual advisor'. The next page is blank and is followed by the title page, which also reproduces the name of the editor. The biblio page gives the date of first publication and this edition. Opposite this is the content's page. Like the Everyman edition, the novel falls between substantial editorial

apparatuses. Before: an introduction of twenty one pages (including references); acknowledgements of six lines (the editor's thanks); 'The Penguin Edition of the Novels of Jane Austen' - an account of Penguin's general editing of Austen (from first editions, not from Chapman, although he is acknowledged), and the rationale for the chaptering is given; 'Note on the Text' - an account of the editing history of *Pride and Prejudice*: Further Reading - eleven alphabetically listed critical texts about Austen published between 1971 and 1992. The next left-hand page is blank and on the right is a facsimile reproduction of the original title page. The text is divided into its original three-volume structure, and each volume is introduced by an intertitle page. The original volume and chapter numbers are reproduced in roman on the top centre of each left-hand page and at the beginning of each new chapter. Another chaptering system (running from chapter one to sixty in arabic) is reproduced on the top centre of each right-hand page. The text runs to 312 pages. The endlims comprise one and a half pages of emendations to the text, which begin on the page opposite the final page of the text; and 22 pages of notes, which include, at the beginning, 'general notes' on three topics: 'social class', 'allusions' and 'language', all with references. A blank page follows. On the next right hand page is an advertisement for the Penguin Website. This is followed by a ten page listing of Penguin classics: a page of contact addresses is followed by six pages of classic titles; The remaining three pages list Austen's other titles in Penguin Classics. Like the Everyman, this edition most obviously addresses students but there is a more explicit scholarly inflection. The introduction, which is referenced, the extensive endnotes (compared with the four pages of the Everyman edition) and the representation of the text's editing history all suggest purposive study. Further, this edition foregrounds its own editorial practices: the Penguin Classic Austen is based on a new editing of the first and subsequent editions, including Chapman but not based on him.[23] The cover blurb suggests a wider readership, foregrounding the text as romance, in both the précis of the plot and the description of the introduction.

3. Analysis: beginnings

While the analysis will concentrate on the readings and reading practices proposed by verbal classification, certain general issues are raised by the cover designs of these four editions. The Penguin 1995 edition's formatting of title, author and publisher on the front cover is very different to the other two paperbacks. The Penguin 1996 and the Everyman conjoin four elements - logo, publisher, author, title - in a text box distinct from the illustration; each is emphasised, but more importantly, a relation is suggested between them. In this case, a kind of contagious authority seems to operate. The publisher 'catches' the value of text and author, but the conjunction also seems to

suggest that the relation is reciprocal: the category and series confer value on the author. This is one of the conventions of most classics publishing: the publisher is strongly marked within the edition and contributes to the value of the text.[24]

By contrast, the Penguin 1995 backgrounds the publisher - only the logo is reproduced, separated from the title and author. The design of these two elements - name at the top, title at the bottom - reproduces one of the two standard sets of conventions for fiction publishing, literary and popular (the other positions the author under the title). This strengthens the relation proposed between the edition and the tv series (Penguin is backgrounded as 'producer'). The cover illustration further strengthens this. The photographic image is not a 'still' in a conventional sense; the characters neither look at each other nor at the same point in front of them. Taken as a whole, the cover design strongly classifies the novel as a period romance. First, the image itself of a young woman and a youngish man, both conventionally good-looking, attired in period dress complete with gloves (the woman bonneted, the man holding a cane) in a rural setting. Even if the reader does not know the identities of the actors, or the series, their co-presence in conventionally gendered terms (she appears shorter, though this may be an effect of her half-sitting on a wall; one of her hands clasps her other wrist; his visible hand holds the cane; she is in the foreground and more brightly lit) proposes them as hero and heroine: they are equally important in the novel as they are in the image (however unequal their social relations may be) which implicates a romance narrative. The implicature is strengthened by the slightly surly, or moody look of the hero and the bright smile of the heroine (who, we assume, will eventually win him over and make him smile too). By contrast, the title proposes an allegorical mode of reading: a translation of the plot and characters into the concepts it conjoins. A formal knowledge of allegory, where frequently the recoded reading articulates a moral parable, could fix and enrich the explicated senses of 'pride' and 'prejudice' as ethical defects. But the image, design and format of the front cover strongly counter such possibilities. The strong interpretative context of romance backgrounds the moral accentualities, proposing them abstractly as the obstacles which must be overcome for the happy resolution of union to be reached. 'Pride' and 'prejudice' are anthropormorphised exclusively as character flaws which have particular salience for the plot and the dynamics between hero and heroine. Most strongly however, the front cover addresses those who have watched and enjoyed the tv series: the novel is proposed as an extension and more importantly a re-experiencing of that pleasure. The tv series itself strongly foregrounded the romance narrative, as did its reception and the novel proposes itself as a text to be 're-read', in part at least as an aide-mémoire for the tv series.[25]

By contrast the cover image of the Penguin 1996 edition proposes nothing about the novel's narrative or, more broadly, genre. The multiple figures, who do not form a

single group or story, and the many sites of focus and detail - the cart, the couple to the right who seem to be entering a garden, the open window, the cat - act to background particular interpretative possibilities. The illustration does contribute to a broader classification however: the text as classic. As in the Everyman edition, which is more specific in its interpretative suggestions, what is important here is the presence of a painting whose time of composition is loosely proximate to that of the text in question.[26] It may mobilise particular expectations and propose specific interpretations, but most significant is the presence of the painting qua painting and its framing: classics do not bleed.[27] These are markers of the text's classic status.[28] The continuity of design that is so marked in classics publishing, particularly in the case of Penguin, not only confers value on the particular text (in ways comparable with the strong foregrounding of the publisher's name and logo), it also constitutes the text recognisably as a classic.

As Genette notes, cover texts are not exclusively addressed to the reader.[29] The whole outer-facing of the 1996 edition makes assumptions about the situations in which the edition might be purchased. Viewed from the perspective of the bookshop (the bookseller as well as the prospective customer), the narrow red band at the top of the spine of the Penguin Classic is a distinguishing feature. The minimal text on the Folio edition, the blank front and back covers, inscribe different situations of purchase and 'use'. These books are not available in a bookshop: they can only be purchased new as 'live' at the Folio Society itself. The main purchasing tool is a catalogue, which emphasises the craft qualities and artisanal value of the edition and often includes photographs of the illustrations.[30] Likewise, the 'blank' front and back covers make sense in the light of the slip-cases which are ubiquitous. Often a single slip-case is designed for the whole series and the spine becomes a design-site for Folio editions: placed in the correct order, spines out on a bookshelf, the Sherlock Holmes series shows a silhouette of Holmes and Watson in profile.[31] This strengthens the suggestion that display rather than use is the dominant. Having outlined some of the ways that design and illustration propose readings, I will now move to the core of the analysis. In what follows I will explore three constituents of the editional apparatus in detail: the blurb and other back cover text, the introduction and the endnotes. These three elements are central to the constitution of the text as classic and are also contrastively interesting, particularly in relation to prescribed readerships and the mode and order of reading they propose. The back cover, for example, most explicitly addresses a possible reader, the notes an actual one; introductions are proposed as a pre-text to the novel, notes are configured to accompany the reading of the novel.

4. The back cover

The blurb on the back cover of the 1995 Penguin edition proposes eight classifications of the novel: as a classic, a text by Jane Austen, a text published by Penguin, an allegorical novel, a comedy, a love-story and as a work of Literature, specifically English Literature. Only two of these are signed, one by the author, the genre markers of the title itself which propose the novel as allegorical; the other by the editor (Vivien Jones), classifying the novel as a romance (in an extract from the introduction).[32] Some of these classifications presuppose one another: English literature presupposes a category 'Literature' which is differentiated according to national criteria. All these classifications generate interpretative and reading possibilities, but the goal here is not just to identify them but to assess their graduated contingency. Do all these classifications have equal strength as interpretative and reading contexts? And are they consistent in their definitions of the novel and proposals as to how it should be read?

Can the novel be defined and read as both 'Literature' and 'love story' for example? These are categories which, in dominant cultural discourses, are deemed to be mutually excluding and call for very different reading practices.[33] Often, Literature and genre-writing function as defining binaries, a relation closely akin to the literary / popular division mentioned earlier. Literature is that which is not genred, is not 'like' any other text: it is unique and cannot be replicated. The genred is precisely that which is institutionally, mechanically repeatable. But even within the category of so-called genred writing, romance is often devalued. Despite the attempts of feminist cultural criticism to reappraise romance and its conventional terms of criticism, 'Mills and Boon' or 'Harlequin', still function as antonomastic renderings of romance, the publisher's name strongly accenting the mechanised, formulaic nature of romance writing.[34]

The classification of the text as Literature is proposed twice: in the tripartite conjunction of publisher's name, logo and classification in the bottom left corner, and in the blurb. The romance classification is asserted in three ways in the blurb: in the synoptic representation of the novel, in the summary of the editor's introduction and in a citation from the editor's introduction. The first classification of the text as Literature is attributable to the publisher. 'Literature' is below publisher, both are left aligned and printed in black in the same sans-serif type face (although 'Penguin' is in upper case and 'Literature' is in upper and lower case). The two are further linked by the third item in the conjunction, the Penguin logo, which is reproduced just to the left of the publisher and the classification. This classification asserts 'Literature' as neutral description and classification itself as an impartial procedure. This is emphasised by its proximity to the price guides, the bar code and ISBN. The price guide is in the same sans-serif type, while the rest of the text on the back cover is in a serif face. The

second categorisation of the text as Literature is proposed in a relative clause within the synopsis:

> ... Mr Darcy - who is quite the most handsome and eligible bachelor in the whole of English literature

The 'text's literary status is only weakly proposed however and it is doubtful whether this is the preferred interpretation. First, the explicit categorisation is light and somewhat odd: the *Tatler* -style list of English Literature's most eligible bachelors. Second, the blurb assumes the reader knows that *Pride and Prejudice* is a work of Literature - it is proposed as shared knowledge, not new - and the primary function of the clause seems to be an attempt to register the extent of the heroine's initial misjudgement: his superlative attractions are the very measure of her error: '[h]er early determination to dislike Mr Darcy 'who is quite the most handsome and eligible bachelor ...' is a misjudgement only matched in folly by Darcy's arrogant pride'. The weakness of the claim is in fact an effect of its textual context. Another classification - the text as romance - is being strongly asserted:

> Few readers have failed to be charmed by the witty and independent spirit of Elizabeth Bennet. Her early determination to dislike Mr Darcy - who is quite the most handsome and eligible bachelor in the whole of English literature - is a misjudgement only matched in folly by Darcy's arrogant pride. Their first impressions give way to truer feelings in a comedy profoundly concerned with happiness and how it might be achieved.

This synopsis represents a number of the standard elements and sequences of a conventional romance narrative: two protagonists, female and male, a first encounter, an obstacle (in this case mutual misunderstanding), and its removal. Further, the emphasis on the heroine, whose attributes are presented first, as is her initial erroneous evaluation of the hero, suggests the genre's gendered centring on feminine experience. The possibility of the 'text-as-literary' classification is consequently backgrounded. What is also interesting is the pastiche of a certain style of writing: 'period', and, if not Austenian, certainly not contemporary or twentieth century. The synopsis is peppered with archaic formulations: the characterisation of readers' responses in terms of 'charm' (in contemporary usage 'charm' is frequently an epithet ascribed to 'period' objects); the attribution of 'spirit' to Elizabeth; the lexeme 'folly'; and the fixed phrase, 'eligible bachelor' to describe Darcy.[35] This last is most often comedic or ironic in contemporary usage, an inflection which the text seems to reproduce at the same time as rendering Darcy a period hero, a suggestion strengthened by the fact that his first name is not revealed.[36] These strongly discernible archaisms 'periodise' other lexical items: 'witty', 'handsome', 'pride'. By co-textual

association these items acquire a period connotation. By contrast, the characterisation of Elizabeth as 'independent', and the use of 'arrogant' as a modifier for Darcy's pride seem discordant, contemporary ascriptions. The pastiche summary therefore resembles (in Sperber and Wilson's sense) both a narrative summary of the text as romance and a certain kind of period literary language. Both types of resemblance share formal linguistic properties with what they purport to resemble: in some ways they 'look like' the types of text they resemble. This is the most distinctive aspect of their metatextuality. On the one hand, as already suggested, the synoptic rendering of the text as a romance narrative makes possible implicatures such as: the novel will end happily, or, more specifically, the novel will end with the marriage of the hero and heroine and not trespass beyond this point. It is romance of a particular kind - 'period' but romance nevertheless. But the paragraph cited above is not exclusively synoptic, it is also markedly evaluative and in this sense resembles a literary-critical discourse. This is most strongly marked in the last sentence: 'a comedy profoundly concerned with happiness and how it might be achieved'. This is not 'just' a comedy, any more than it is just a romance: it has serious concerns. The happiness in question is not simply that of individual characters, its sense here is conceptual. In turn this suggests an allegorical or symbolic reading of the text for its 'deeper' significance. It is these interpretative possibilities which I would argue are more strongly proposed: the valuations which mark a literary-critical register, the fact that this literary interpretative context is strengthened by the authorial quotation (would it carry the same authority if it was signed Jeffrey Archer?), and the multiple but diffuse markers of the text's classic status. The final result: the novel is a romance but it should not be read exclusively as such, because it exceeds the bounds of such a definition.

A brief contrast with the Everyman 1993 blurb is pertinent here because it too offers a synoptic representation of the novel:

> Belonging to the minor gentry, the Bennets live at Longbourn in Hertfordshire. Mother of five daughters, Mrs Bennet's chief interest is their marriage prospects. At neighbouring Netherfield, the arrival of a rich young bachelor, Charles Bingley, his two sisters and his friend Fitzwilliam Darcy fires Mrs Bennet's aspirations.
>
> The comedy which ensues, of ardent declarations and proposals, of rejections, infidelities, elopement and finally - if you will believe it - happy marriages, has made this Jane Austen's most popular novel.

What is pertinent here is the backgrounding of romance: the heroine is not identified and there is no strong suggestion that the novel focuses on feminine experience. Although the matter of romance - proposals, rejections, marriage and so on - is mentioned, romance is not a strong interpretative or reading context. The listing of these actions, not linked to named characters, the focus in the first paragraph on the

Bennet family as a collective, in particular Mrs Bennet (rather than the usually unmarried individuals whose particular desires underscore romance), and the classification of the novel as a comedy all make romance a very weak implicature and subsequent context.[37]

5. Introductions

Unlike covers, an introduction may or may not form part of the editional apparatus. In Britain, contemporary fiction is not usually accompanied by an author's or editor's introduction, and the Penguin 1995 fiction edition follows this convention. The other three do incorporate introductions and both the Penguin 1996 and the Everyman 1993 mention theirs in the blurb. But introductions are not necessarily part of the editional apparatus of the classic. Whilst the default classics published by Penguin, Oxford and Everyman always include them, a number of the green-backed Penguin Twentieth Century Classics do not .[38] In general terms, the presence of an introduction is itself a marker of a certain kind of text, one whose value is thereby confirmed and secured. It is noticeable that the pared down apparatus of a Wordsworth Classic, which has no notes (and none of the paraphernalia of critical extracts, text summaries and life-and-times chronologies) does incorporate a two-page introduction. In this case it would seem that the presence of an introduction, however modest, inscribes the text's value: it merits an introduction, even if it does not necessarily need one.

Richard Church's introduction to the Folio 1957 edition is the shortest and proposes the simplest argument, making it a useful place to begin. The first and longest part of his introduction is a biographical narrative which assumes from the first sentence that the life of the writing subject is a natural topic for an introduction:

> The fact that comparatively little is known about the private life and character of Jane Austen is due to the person who was most intimate with her, the beloved confidante and sister Cassandra, who destroyed much of her correspondence.[39]

However, most of the actual information presented is presumed to be new to the prescribed reader. It is the logic of the relation that is assumed not the specifics of life and works. We are told, for example, that Chawton, where Austen lived, is 'now a national monument and may be visited'.[40] The unequal knowledge of writing subject and prescribed reader is a standard convention of the two genres that predominantly constitute the introduction and shape the interpretative and reading practices proposed: biography and literary criticism. Thus, the frequent use of the present tense to represent the actions of the writer ('She [Austen] says of it herself that ...'; 'Nor is *Pride and Prejudice* so artlessly effervescent as Jane Austen pretends'; 'Austen writes about ...' and so on [my emphasis]) provides no evidence that the writer is alive.[41]

This convention often has a particular purpose, for example, facilitating the representation of a range of texts by the same author without having to resort to complex internal chronologies and awkward locutions such as 'will have written'; it may also, in particular contexts, accent the perennial quality of the writer in question. The identification of the broad categories of biography and literary criticism in Church's introduction is not intended to simplify its textual form. These classifications are provisional, locating features of the introduction within certain broad generic classifications, the specific forms of which will be explored further below. This broad categorisation also makes it possible to observe variation and divergence from the very general set of conventions which characterise these genres. Thus whilst Church's introduction follows certain conventions of biography and literary criticism, specifically the writing subject's marked knowledge of the object of utterance and authoritative relation to the prescribed reader, there are occasions when these relations are deviated from. On occasion, a solidarity is constructed between the prescribed reader and the writing subject, both of whom are asserted to be 'primarily interested in the magic of the books' and who are distinguished from the 'bibliophil', 'scholar' and 'grammarian'.[42] 'Magic' contests, although lightly, the scholarly discourses of demonstration. Indeed the 'I' strongly implicates that he is not a critic: 'not only I, but critics'.[43] But this locution, which is apparently self-deprecating, also claims the authority of a shared judgement. The writing subject is knowledgeable and conversant with disciplinary discriminations. The 'I' may resist naming himself a critic but he is familiar with critical repertoires. This reinforces the differential knowledge that the writing subject and the prescribed reader have, and the writing subject's authority. The writing subject is familiar with scholarly discourse but this knowledge is not proposed as pertinent to the reader's reading of the novel.

The biographical narrative begins with a standard Austen topos - 'comparatively little' is known of her life, an assertion which would seem to differentiate Austen from other, more richly documented biographical subjects. However:

> Sufficient has been found out about her, however, to correct the view held until comparatively recently that the six immortal books were written under cover of a blotting pad, in furtive moments of semi-seclusion by a timid spinster fearing the ridicule of her family.[44]

Biographical and literary critical genres are conjoined here in a parodic representation of Austen's compositional practice. The 'corrected' version, authorised by the work of Chapman in the second paragraph, refutes a narrative of Austen's writing career as furtive, timorous and fearful; she is now revealed to have written her novels in 'the most happy of circumstances', fully supported by her family.[45] Her familial context was materially comfortable and culturally 'sophisticated' and the primary setting for her

formal education which was also an ethical and emotional training.[46] But the family is also represented as a conduit to the outside world. The biographical narrative proposes Austen's life as rich and wide-ranging in experience and knowledge, a representation which dialogically opposes a much iterated version of the Austen narrative: a woman who hid her creative ability under a stock of blotting paper and knew little of the world.[47] It is this dialogic rebuke which drives the representation of the complete life. It is this very completeness which might account for the gap of eight years when she wrote nothing: perhaps she was just too busy having a good time.[48] But perhaps most importantly, this corrected biography makes sense of the 'six immortal books' in ways which the characterisation of the author as 'timid spinster' cannot. The erroneous story of the timid spinster creates a paradox which Chapman's narrative and its re-representation in the introduction resolves. The authorial classification and the reading proposed by it is therefore of a specific kind. It is not simply that any life explains any work, it is, more particularly, the proposal that a certain kind of life is a necessary pre-requisite to lasting literary achievement: a life that is rich in certain kinds of experience and knowledge. Biography therefore explicates 'the magic of the books'. This is turn suggests that this biographical knowledge is an explanatory context. If, as Church argues, Jane Bennet is modelled on Cassandra, we can implicate by analogy that the rich and varied acquaintance that Austen made in London and Bath became models for characters, that her possible 'affairs' may furnish some of the romantic incident in the novels, and that her two sailor brothers might likewise have become models of masculinity.[49] It is explanatory contexts and possibilities that Church's introduction propose most strongly, but these order interpretative and evaluative ones. For example, biographical explication may well weaken or cancel the meanings proposed by the formal narrative patternings of the text because it is the text's likeness to life and a particular life which is foregrounded. The explicatory emphasis also orders evaluative possibilities: the completeness of the works makes sense of the completeness of the life and vice versa.

Austen's life is the guarantee of a certain quality: maturity. This is the value that binds the particular and complete life to the text, it is also proposed as the central preoccupation of a serious reading. This emphasis on maturity is evolved through a conceit which compares the experience of first reading with the first version of the novel and a second reading with the final version. The novel retains in palimpsest 'the freshness of youthful lyricism' but:

> The second reading reveals the mature character of the author, her shrewd wisdom and its capacity for appreciation of suffering, her economic delineation of personality and its differentiation from character. These are qualities that not even literary genius can guarantee in youthful writers.[50]

Maturity is the central value proposed here and is the explicit means by which the relations between 'art' and 'life' are understood. The sense of maturity here is highly specific. It is not predominantly biological, nor is it socio-cultural (someone who has passed into whatever the society defines as adulthood), though it clearly draws on these senses as the reference to youthful writers demonstrates. But beyond this, maturity is proposed as a contingent property which some people have and others do not and which can also be applied to a text. 'The second reading' is not simply another reading, one which takes place after the first. It is proposed as a reading of a different type: attentive, careful, 'close'. It is the true or 'correct' reading, indicated in a strongly contrastive choice of verb and mood:

> At first reading it may seem to consist wholly of light comedy, built upon a structure as artificial as a play by Sheridan'.[51]

The choice of 'seem' and the subjunctive mood strongly inscribe the writing subject's distance from the classification and evaluation which follows. The second reading 'reveals'; the declarative form and the choice of verb and determiner ('the') mark the writing subject's assent to the evaluation which follows. There is only one type of second reading - the correct one. What gives this particular sense to maturity is the conjunction of a literary-critical genre and a particular kind of authorial discourse. The genre banishes strictly 'biological' senses and proposes maturity as an evaluative category (evaluation is after all a staple of literary critical discourse and strongly marked here). The authorial discourse conceptualises the authorial subject and their works as interchangeable terms of explanation, as the anthropomorphism of the category suggests. The text 'reveals' the authorial subject but the authorial subject also explains the text.

The genre most strongly marked in Conrad's introduction is literary criticism, but it is its divergences from convention that are interesting. The introduction makes no specific reference to any Austen criticism. 'Critics', when referred to, are a collective who are differentiated from the writing subject on the grounds of their naiveté, 'critics have taken [Austen] at her word'.[52] As in Church's introduction, the writing subject is knowledgeable about scholarly discourse but refrains from explicit identification. But while Church does not comment explicitly on the bibliophile's concerns, Conrad makes a definitive (indeed hyperbolic) judgement on critics - they have all got it wrong - and a very definite proposal to the reader: s/he should not reproduce the errors of the critics but follow the writing subject who definitively holds the key to the correct reading.[53]

Conrad's introduction is, like Church's, author-centred in its discourse and constructed against scholarly norms and procedures, but the effects and reading

proposals are very different. One immediate reason for this is the editional context as a whole. The Everyman 1993 edition, like the Penguin 1996 and unlike the Folio 1957, strongly inscribe within themselves their strong relations to higher education institutions. Thus whilst Conrad's mode of writing is essayistic, the 'Note on the Author and Editor' informs us that he, has 'since 1973 ... taught English at Christ Church Oxford' and is the author of 'numerous works of criticism'.[54] The long-standing institutional affiliation confirms his authority as editor and likewise the authority of the edition as a whole. In this case the authorial classification does not emerge so insistently at the outset, though its main theme, irony, does. Austen's irony is claimed to account for a general misunderstanding of the novels, and her correspondence, including her remarks about *Pride and Prejudice*. Everything in the novel is explicable in terms of irony:

> *Pride and Prejudice* is not only ironic in its procedures and assumptions: it is also about irony ... irony is both form and content.[55]

Irony is defined simply as meaning the opposite of what you say ('As always [Austen] means the opposite of what, with apparent innocuousness, she is saying') and each of the main characters in the novel is examined by Conrad as a more or less successful ironist.[56] Taken together, they exemplify the pleasures as well as the pitfalls of irony as practice, a practice governed by societal hypocrisy which makes truth-telling difficult or impossible.[57] However, irony is always part of an authorial classification and one of Conrad's preferred modes of designating Austen is as 'the ironist'.[58] This antonomastic locution enables a set of shifts between a category of writing subjects (ironists in general), Austen herself, her characters and readers. Reflecting on the familial disbelief that greets Elizabeth Bennet's confession of her attachment to Darcy, Conrad comments:

> The ironist's evasions have trapped her; and Jane Austen has suffered the same ignominy as her heroine.[59]

Elizabeth and Austen are both members of this category of ironists. The shifting and slipping between author and character is one of the most distinctive features of the introduction. And it suggests a specific mode of reading the novel which is organised by the authorial classification:

> Nor is *Pride and Prejudice* so artlessly effervescent as Jane Austen pretends. Its light, bright and sparkling high spirits are either, as in Lydia's case, a reckless volatility indifferent to the consequences of its actions, or, as in the different cases of Elizabeth and her father, an ironic discipline, forcing oneself to laugh at a fate which if taken seriously would be ruinously depressing.[60]

'Light, bright and sparkling' alludes to Austen's own description of the novel as 'rather too light and bright and sparkling' - which Conrad, characteristically, does not provenance. These qualities are now anthropomorphised as 'spirits' and contrasted with various characters in the novel. The anchoring of the text within a dominant authorial classification and an explicating authorial discourse are what enables this personification of the text's 'spirits'. The spirits are the inscribed presence of an authorial subject, making characters the assumed commonsense point of comparison. There is no suggestion that these qualities of lightness and brightness could be attributed to register or 'tone' or to narrative incident. The reading strategy proposed is centred on characters, conceived in the introduction as people who can be compared with the author. The heroine of the novel is most strongly comparable with Austen but the fact that Elizabeth shares certain attributes with her youngest sister and with her father implicate that these characters too have something in common with Austen.[61] This discourse precludes a number of commonsense distinctions: the text is not a translation of life into art; nor is it a reflection of its author's experiences. Rather, the novel as concept is the instantiation of authorial experience, and what more obvious place to look than at the 'people' who populate them? Within Conrad's argument and the discourse which shapes it, Elizabeth's fate at 'the end of *Pride and Prejudice*' is 'ignominy': no one will believe that she is in love with Darcy.[62] Given his argument that Austen is misunderstood and that character is the instantiation of authorial experience, it is not surprising that Conrad views this as 'the end'. But if we know the novel we might well ask whether it is really ignominy to 'suffer' the fate of a happy marriage to 'the most handsome and eligible bachelor in English Literature'. Such a discourse severely limits how character can be read. They clearly cannot be interpreted and explicated as indices of values or structural positions for example. In more general terms, it backgrounds narrative as a mode of meaningful patterning since formal categories play no part in the analysis.

Author and character are likewise comparable with actual readers. Elizabeth and her father's irony are strategies against depression, 'forcing oneself to laugh ...' (my emphasis).[63] The choice of 'oneself' expands this practice of ironic discipline beyond the characters to include people in general. 'We', as readers, can compare our responses to situations with these characters. Indeed we are encouraged to identify with them: to insert ourselves within the text rather than observe it from the outside. The authorial discourse and the reading strategy it proposes are not biographical. Unlike Church, Conrad supplies no biographical information about Austen. This absence is ostensibly justified by other parts of the apparatus: specifically the biographical sketch and the chronology of Austen's life-and-times, both of which precede the introduction. But this commonsense explanation is inadequate. Conrad's introduction is not simply avoiding redundancy. Rather it is an indicator of the type of

authorial discourse that organises the introduction.[64] This is centred around a conception of a generic human subject whose presence is instantiated in 'other' human subjects: characters. Character is defined as the site of presence of the authorial subject. These interpretative and reading proposals are strengthened by the introduction's mode of referral to other texts..

Austen is compared to and contrasted explicitly with Sterne, Defoe, Joyce, Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Swift, William Wordsworth, Lord Byron and Henry James.[65] All but three of these references are made by allusion to characters. Indeed the only texts referred to by name in the introduction apart from *Pride and Prejudice* itself are Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Swift's 'Day of Judgement' and James's *The Turn of the Screw* and *The Aspern Papers*.[66] Typically:

> The great novelist is generally one whose characters are too volatile and various and too rapt in their own delighted self-discovery to endure control. But Jane Austen is a great novelist almost despite herself, for whereas egotistic monsters like Uncle Toby or Mr Dick, Moll Flanders or Molly Bloom, are created by the novelist's indulgence and affection as if yielding composition of the novel to the characters, Jane Austen's creativity is a reflex not of generosity but of baffled impotent ill-will.[67]

This strengthens the reading strategy proposed by the relationship between author, character, and reader discussed above: authors 'create' characters who they are then unable to control.[68] The novel is a kind of battle between author and characters who have the same status as 'people'. More generally, this defines the novel as a relationship between author and characters, which the reader can enter in the terms set out above.

This form of reference to other texts is in significant part determined by a prescribed reader, idealised as an interlocutor whose cultural knowledge is equal to the writing subject. The casual, allusive gesturing to other texts rather than a more explicit form of reference seems to inscribe a spoken situation rather than a written one, conversational and informal in its patterns of interaction. The allusion to text by character assumes a shared cultural knowledge of the texts and their authors, a familiarity with a particular history of the novel. This shift to a representation of a spoken conversation is one of the markers of the text's resistance to written scholarly norms. The effect of this is a perhaps paradoxical augmentation of the writing subject's authority, whose knowledge is, so to speak, on the tip of his tongue, and a strengthening of the interpretative practices proposed.

What informs the plane of comparison and contrast and the intertextual location of Austen within it is, of course, literary value. This is the only discernible criterion and it requires no justification. The relations proposed are not form specific: the list comprises poets and a dramatist /poet as well as novelists; nor is it nationally specific:

James is American, Sterne, Swift and Joyce are Irish.[69] Nor is it period specific. One of the most obvious effects of this intertextual location of Austen is the demobilisation of historical reading practices. Both Byron and Wordsworth are historical contemporaries of Austen: Wordsworth was born in 1770, five years before Austen, Byron, although born in 1788, published his first collection of poems in 1807 and *Childe Harolde's Pilgrimage* in 1812, a year after Austen's first novel, *Sense and Sensibility* was published and a year before *Pride and Prejudice*. And indeed, Conrad asserts a contrast between Byron and Wordsworth on the one hand and Austen on the other:

> The ironist's exhausting dialectic finds society and solitude equally insupportable. The predicament is a romantic one but Jane Austen lacks the romantic temperament which can make the self an all-engrossing world, as Wordsworth in *The Prelude* or Childe Harold do. Hers is the underside of their egotistical sublimity ... [70]

This contrast makes possible a set of implicatures about a period-specific 'zeitgeist' which the three writers responded to differently: a certain kind of constituting context which shapes and informs their writing. These implicatures are certainly encouraged by the immediate textual context in which these remarks are made, but only for the idealised reader-interlocutor characterised above. Such implicatures can be derived by a reader who has knowledge that (a) the three writers were near contemporaries (and were publishing simultaneously) and (b) that Romanticism was an important contemporaneous and historically particular framework of thought. The register, and specifically the mode of address assumes this knowledge as shared. There is no strong marking of the contemporaneity of the writers' texts. It is only if the reader knows that Byron is creator of Childe Harolde or that 'romantic temperament' and 'sublimity' gesture to Romanticism, that a connection becomes possible. The lower case 'r' and the fact that sublimity is not glossed suggests an prescribed reader conversant with Romantic preoccupations. But the lower case 'r' also opens up another sense of 'romantic' for a reader unfamiliar with these knowledges, one which connects with the genre of romance, a sense which could be seen to be strengthened by its conjunction with temperament. 'Romantic temperament' re-constitutes a discernible historical movement as an emotional propensity in certain human subjects. Further, the broader intertextual context of the introduction as a whole, weakens such interpretations and explanations about what (other than the abiding genius of the author) might have shaped the novel.[71] None of the other writers with whom Austen is compared are contemporaneous with her. Joyce and Defoe, Dickens and Shakespeare are comparable with Austen and one another according to a criterion of value which transcends time and space. Whilst a period-specific comparison is locally encouraged

of a particular and idealised reader, the specific authorial discourses which govern the introduction weaken such interpretative possibilities and contexts. Beyond this, it is arguable whether the location of Austen within a classificatory category of great writers generates any specific intertextual interpretative contexts at all. The abstract and unexplicated character of the category render such a location an intertextual 'blank': what is asserted is the uniqueness of Austen (and Dickens and Shakespeare).

The genre most strongly marked in Vivien Jones's introduction is again literary criticism, but history writing is also an important interpretative context. Of the three, Jones's introduction is the most conventionally scholarly in its interpretation of the conventions of literary criticism. Texts and citations are fully provenanced and there are a number of proleptic summaries of the introduction as a whole and of various parts of it.[72] It explicitly addresses a contemporary reader, conversant with popular forms and in particular romance, but this prescribed reader is also a serious reader, probably a student, as the detailed argument about the complex political and intellectual codings of the 'standard' romance narrative seems to suggest. The classifications proposed for the novel are many and certainly more various than either Church's or Conrad's. The text is classified as a novel by Austen, a romance, a political novel, an early nineteenth-century novel, a novel by a woman writer, and a classic.[73] Each of these classifications can be seen to propose different intertextual locations for the novel and different interpretative and reading strategies. The classification 'romance' locates *Pride and Prejudice* within a huge class of texts - historical and contemporary, popular and literary - which also cuts across media. This proposes a mode of reading which is centrally focused on pleasure and escapism, a suggestion explicitly inscribed in the textual contexts where this classification is proposed. Darcy:

> ... epitomises the romantic hero, the ideal object of desire, in popular romance fantasy [my emphasis]. [74]

Elizabeth's marriage to him, 'is the stuff of wish-fulfilment'. Further, the romance plot is not only 'conventional' but 'pleasurable' and:

> The romantic fantasy which so effectively shapes Austen's early nineteenth century novel is still a powerful cultural myth for readers in the late twentieth century. We still respond with pleasure to the rags-to-riches love story ... [my emphasis]. [75]

What is the relation between writing subject, object of utterance and prescribed reader here? While Jones's introduction is the most conventionally scholarly of the three, in most of the textual contexts where the classification of romance is embedded, the writing subject's generic authority is, to a significant extent, conceded, in favour of an appeal to the shared knowledges of writing subject and prescribed reader. Above,

the clearest instance of this is the inclusive 'we', a pronominal form which here binds together writing subject and prescribed reader. This is even more explicitly marked elsewhere in the text: 'as every reader of romance fiction knows' and, '[a]s good readers of romantic fiction, we know long before Elizabeth ...'[76] Both configure writing subject and prescribed reader as familiar with the romance narrative that shapes *Pride and Prejudice*, a familiarity which enables this collective 'we' to predict the dénouement and enjoy the gap in the heroine's knowledge, a gap that will eventually, certainly be filled. This shared knowledge is also signalled in such markers as: 'the rags-to-riches love story' and so on. The fixed phrase 'rags-to-riches', a departure from the general formality of the introduction, marks the pressure of the rhetorical appeal to the reader to recognise the novel as a familiar object. This commonality between writing subject and prescribed reader is strengthened by the gendering of both as feminine. It is Darcy who is the object of desire and Elizabeth's marriage that is the stuff of wish-fulfilment. It is gender which seems to explicate this familiarity with the romance form. Further, this 'we' 'may feel slightly disturbed by the inequality ... at the heart of (their) ... union'. Interestingly, this feminist 'we' is not as confidently shared as the 'we' who knows romance. The subjunctive form and the minimising effect of the modifier 'slightly' suggests that this proposition is more controversial and less likely to be shared by the reader.

Familiarity with the romance form is also a proposed strategy for the reading of romance. It is the very recognisability of romance as a genre that is strongly suggested as one of its key pleasures. The prescribed reader will identify the romantic hero and heroine immediately, she will know that by the end of the novel, all obstacles to their happy union will have been overcome.[77] She will be able to read the ostensible hostility of the protagonists as suppressed desire and so on. Above all, the reader is in a position of superior knowledge to both the hero and heroine because she knows how to read these signifiers and the 'happy ending' dénouement from the very beginning. Knowledge of the genre constitutes the reader in a position of authority to the characters. The other pleasure strongly proposed here is escapism. In the representations cited above, the definition of romance is located within a discursive binary of fantasy/reality, myth/reality, ideal/real. Romance is fantasy, myth and idealisation, the opposite of reality and the everyday. The reader is not supposed to measure fantasy or romance against the everyday and find it wanting. The fact that the heroine's inner and initially invisible beauty is finally exfoliated as outer radiance, and the stagy coincidences that keep bringing the hero and heroine together, are not evaluated as implausible. The rules of the everyday do not apply to romance. Reading romance is an escape from the everyday including the everyday of many other modes of fiction. Romance is therefore predominantly reader-centred in its definition. These pleasures are not only derived from the familiar narrative form. The gendering of the

prescribed reader suggests a particular way of 'reading' character: the strategy or practice of identification with the heroine.

However, Jones's classification of the novel as a romance functions as a move within two larger arguments which rely on different classifications and different discursive assumptions. First, the romance narrative goes some way to explain the text's perdurance, a feature which, to some extent, reduces the gap between the early nineteenth and late twentieth centuries: 'romance is still a powerful cultural myth', we still respond with pleasure ...' Romance enables an understanding of its continued appeal. The text's classification as romance gives one of the reasons why it is a classic and a popular classic at that. Second, the romance narrative and its persuasive pleasures are 'deployed' by Austen for particular ends: to construct a set of arguments about the social and political order, and about women's place within it.[78] The romance form is presented, by Jones, as the deliberate choice of an authorial agent: as the ideal rhetorical form for a political argument that is also specifically political in its address, in that it is explicitly and intentionally suasive. Further:

> ... to point out basic structural similarities between Austen's novel and a Mills and Boon or Harlequin romance is not to reduce Austen's achievement.[79]

These similarities are simultaneously asserted and more strongly, resisted. 'Basic' modifies 'structural', limiting the plane of comparison to certain formal resemblances. The contrast between the specificity of 'Austen's novel' and the generic romance signified by 'Mills and Boon or Harlequin', un-authored, untitled and designated only by publisher, like the blurb, sets strict limits for a comparative reading strategy. Even so, 'Austen's achievement' must be strongly asserted. The classification of the text as romance may suggest certain reading strategies but this is not the only or the most appropriate way to read it. Romance as a category and reading practice is subordinated to two other classificatory contexts which shape the reading and interpretative possibilities proposed by the introduction: authorial and historical.

'Discourse that possesses an author's name is not to be immediately consumed and forgotten; neither is it accorded the momentary attention given to ordinary fleeting words'.[80] Whilst romance is an object of consumption and any particular instance of it is forgettable - Mills and Boon, Harlequin - the authorial text demands a different mode of reading. The authorial classification, and the discourse which operates it, is inscribed in the marking of Austen's deliberate intention: 'Austen's use of romance', 'Austen's skilful use of romance', 'Austen's deployment of the conventional, pleasurable romantic plot'.[81] Not only does she knowingly utilise the romance plot, she knows that it is conventional and pleasurable; convention is a conscious choice which serves her substantive purpose. As in the blurb, the novel is proposed as more

than just a love story. Reading the novel requires an understanding of the way that the romance form is coded, to mean more than appears to say. The other central classification of the introduction is organised by a historicist discourse. Jones, unlike Church or Conrad, acknowledges that the text meant differently in an early nineteenth-century context and she is specifically interested in:

> The meanings that Austen's use of romance might have had for a contemporary audience.[82]

Indeed the romantic form of the novel is conceived by Jones as a potential hazard for the prescribed reader: the very familiarity of the narrative may mask its preoccupations.[83] These are embedded in original and originating context that can only be addressed through a cultural and intellectual history of England in the 1790s.[84] The meanings of specific words in the novel, for example, 'rational' and 'elegant', are discussed as key terms within a contemporaneous debate about femininity.[85] The reading strategy proposed is very different from and indeed incompatible with the one proposed for romance. As a romance, *Pride and Prejudice* is proposed as a familiar object, as a historical text it is alien. As is often the case with new historicist argument, the historical moment of the text and the text itself are in part represented as a foreign country: 'strangeness' is the chosen lexeme.[86] And what is foregrounded are the interpretative difficulties for the contemporary reader. Austen's texts

> work on the shared assumption that nuances of language, or dress, or behaviour can carry very particular implications: as comparatively straightforward signs of social status for example ... ; or - more problematically for modern readers - as conscious references to the terms and issues which were being contested in contemporary cultural debates.[87]

Jones's argument focuses on the latter, again insisting that such issues are 'consciously' referenced: part of a deliberate authorial design. This renders the authorial and historicist classifications and the practices they propose congruent and compatible. Whilst Church and Conrad propose predominantly explicatory strategies, Jones's are predominantly designed to facilitate interpretation. Interpretation is explicitly conceived here as a process of translation which can only be undertaken if the reader knows the discourses and languages that constitute the text. It is these that the introduction seeks to supply as contexts which will both 'thicken' the reader's interpretation and, more importantly, lead her to something approaching the intended reading: authorial and historical. Darcy, for example, is not merely the generic moody-but-eligible hero of romance, he is the 'new aristocratic man' who 'uses his power and knowledge to re-establish social harmony' (p.xxvi).[88] Beyond this, his character, as both a set of positions within the structure of the narrative and as a cluster

of values, is allusive in specifically literary terms. By the end of the novel, 'as at the end of Shakespearean comedy', he is a figure of comic reconciliation; he is also likened to a protagonist of Richardson's, Sir Charles Grandison.[89] What is important here is less the detail of Jones's own reading however, than the reading and reading practice it proposes:

> We could hardly fail to sympathise with Elizabeth's acute sense of [Mr Collins's] awfulness as prospective husband ... It may be less obvious, however, that when Mr Collins obtusely insists on praising Elizabeth's modesty and economy (p.90), his terminology aligns him with advocates of a middle-class idea of submissive domestic womanhood, an ideal which was at the time an influential aspect of reactionary political discourse.[90]

Jones goes on to specify the terms of this discourse, but what is pertinent is the contrast between what is obvious ('[w]e could hardly fail to sympathise ... ') and what 'may be less obvious'. This 'may' is an understatement for any reader unacquainted with these discourses. Like Church and Conrad, Jones contrasts less with more adequate readings: it is not sufficient to read *Pride and Prejudice* as 'just' a romance. This, in turn, opens up an interesting general comparison with the Folio and Everyman editions where the construction and position of the writing subject is explicitly authoritative, and serves to strengthen and legitimate the reading contexts proposed. The writing subject of Jones's introduction begins by asserting a commonality with the prescribed readership; nor are the pleasures of the romance plot represented as trivial or 'wrong'. When the writing subject first introduces the historical-discursive knowledge that she argues is so critical to interpreting the text (as quoted above), the distance that it opens up between her and the prescribed reader is downplayed: 'what may be less obvious ... ' That said, the authority of the reading proposed, has, if anything, more force than either Conrad or Church. For what a historicist method of this kind suggests is less a reading practice that the prescribed reader can deploy, than a reading which s/he should follow. Given the value and indeed necessity that is attributed to historicist reading in the introduction, it is very likely that the reader will either mobilise an existing assumption that historical context is important to understanding literature, or at least Austen (which would doubtless be strengthened by this text), or produce it as an implicature. To take the text cited above as only one of many examples: if what Mr Collins says is part of a particular discourse 'at the time', and if knowledge of this identifies him in specific political-historical terms, then the conclusion-interpretation is that such contexts are pertinent to the understanding of the text. However, this general assumption does not, in itself, supply particular interpretative contexts for interpretation or reading: these can only by supplied by the elaborating decodings of the introduction. The prescribed reader does not know the particular accentualities of 'family' in Burkean discourse for example

which is here proposed as central to understanding the text.[91] S/he is wholly reliant on the writing subject for such knowledge. What the introduction does not translate remains foreign or strange, all the reader can do is keep in mind as they read that there is more going on than meets the eye.

This historicist reading is specifically concerned with gender regimes. The writing subject explicitly identifies herself as sympathetic to feminism, quoting with approval 'the important feminist insight from the late sixties...[:] "the personal is political"'. This opens up the possibility of a more abstract practice of gendered reading.

> Austen writes about '3 or 4 Families in a Country Village' - 'the very thing to work on', as she told her niece Anna (*Letters*, p.275) - and about the fates and choices of their marriageable daughters. She writes, therefore, about femininity and about class: about forms of identity and about marriage as a political institution which reproduces - symbolically as well as literally - the social order.[92]

She then goes on to cite the dictum 'the personal is political'. Again a translative interpretative practice is proposed. The register or language shifts from the particular scenario and narrative to a gloss or translation which is markedly conceptual and governed by a feminist discourse. This translative practice is not necessarily dependent on particular historical knowledges and it suggests ways of reading (in particular interpreting and explicating), many aspects of Austen's writing (given the strong authorial classification discussed above). For example, Elizabeth Bennet's relations with Fitzwilliam Darcy are not merely interpretable as a complex meshing of love and misunderstanding, but must also be interpreted and explicated as a representation of gender and other social relations, particularly as they pertain to authority. Further, 'marriage' does not simply or even most importantly mean the legally binding and public union of a man and a woman, it is an institution which contributes to reproduction and legitimation of social relations, including most specifically here, gender relations; and the marriages which are represented in the novel, and particularly those which take place within the narrative are to be interpreted in these terms.

Such a reading offers a set of primary conceptual categories and relations - femininity, masculinity, patriarchy and so on - through which the narrative and argument of the novel can be read. Such a mode of reading is clearly strongly 'symbolic' in that it reads particularised events and characters in specifically social terms. And although Jones figures gender in historicist terms, the general gendered reading sketched above is authorised by the introduction because of the strong terms in which the translation is legitimated: 'she writes <u>therefore</u> about ...' ; and because of the approving citation of 'the personal is the political'. The likelihood of such a reading is, of course, dependent not only on the knowledges of the reader, but on their relations to that knowledge. For the feminist reader, such a reading strategy may

already be mobilised, and may simply be confirmed or strengthened by the discursive context. To the reader unfamiliar with such translations, the context may be more or less suasive, or not suasive at all. Various relations to knowledge may block the gendered reading instanced above, most obviously a hostility to feminism and/or a hostility to conceptualising and reading 'Literature' in explicitly political terms. Both assumptions form part of the set of possible statements in a number of dominant discourses. The situation of reading may likewise strengthen such interpretative possibilities or weaken them. A pedagogic situation where gender as a concept and set of discourses is central, or at least foregrounded, may strengthen such a context, and the kinds of reading that follow from it; it might however entrench antagonism, ambivalence or uncertainty about the values of such a practice.

This focus on gender marks a strong contrast with Church and Conrad. Church's life of Austen is clearly also the life of a woman - the narrative possibilities (and limitations) of Austen's life, the inevitable focus on romance and the domestic, the claim that she was pretty and so on - and his own preferred naming of her as 'Jane' open up the interpretative context of Austen as a woman writer.[93] Likewise, Conrad's argument that a profoundly censoring society makes irony a valuable weapon can, with the knowledge that women were subordinate to men in every respect during this period, construct such implicatures as: for women, irony may have been the only weapon, or/and that censorship and self-censorship were imposed and self-imposed on women even more severely and so on.[94] But, in both cases, though for different reasons, such contexts and implicatures are unlikely. In Church's case the comparison of Austen with Mozart (and the fact that no other women writers are mentioned), the complete absence of socio-historical context and the fact that the text is never classified as a romance make such contexts and implicatures highly unlikely.[95] Likewise, Conrad's generic human cannot, in explicit terms at least, be gendered, any more than it can be geographically or historically located.

As noted above, the authority of the editor is a marked feature of each introduction. But while the authority of Conrad and Jones is in part constituted by their representation as institutionally affiliated scholars, Church's authority is more explicitly dependent on the rhetorical self-representation that emerges in the introduction. However, this difference is less significant than the fact that each of the editors is named, each introduction is signed. This is a distinctive feature of classics publishing in Britain and differentiates it from the majority of other categories. Unlike television or film in particular, where a credit is the 'right' of everyone involved in the production, however lowly, the edition is, with the exception of the author, anonymous. The naming of the editor (and in the case of the Everyman 1993 and Penguin 1996 editions, the representation of their professional life), constitutes a relation of intimacy between text and editor: a personal and personalising process.[96]

Therefore whilst a number of the texts of the edition (the blurb, the biographical summaries and so on) remain unsigned and there is no credit for any other editing function, the naming of 'the' editor inscribes the distinctiveness of the classic. Not only does the editor have a particular role and function, but her very naming asserts the discreteness and the finite character of the text which is presumed to precede all editorial intervention.

The introduction seem to exemplify the contradiction that orders and constitutes the classic. The introduction must justify its presence and the difference that this marks from many other modes of fiction publishing; yet the 'cost' of this must be to demonstrate that the legibility inscribed in the classic's perdurance is in some sense vulnerable. Here the relation is most explicitly represented in the ways that each introduction contrasts one kind of reading with another. Church contrasts the first and second reading as the immature versus the mature: the latter obviously is the goal or ideal; Conrad proposes that all other critical readings of Austen are wrong and that she is fundamentally misunderstand; Jones does not deny the pleasures of the immediate romance reading, but, she argues, this is not an adequate reading. Such discriminations and differentiations foreground a more general issues about the category of the classic. Each of the introductions suggest in different ways the possibilities, the ease of misinterpreting the text. Unless we read 'maturely', unless we fully understand and appreciate the work that irony does, unless we situate the novel in its immediate discursive contexts, we are liable to misunderstand the text's meanings. The tensions between intelligibility and opacity are most acutely marked in the noting practices of classics, and it is these I will consider now. But what noting practices also suggest is a negotiation and resolution of the conflict between transparency and opacity.

6. Notes

Notes are not a necessary feature of the classic. Wordsworth editions, for example, do not include notes. However the established classics publishers in Britain - Oxford, Penguin and Everyman - do. And indeed the notes to the Penguin 1996 and Everyman 1993 editions are 'advertised' on the back cover. This marks an important contrast from the non-classic Penguin 1995: notes may not be necessary to the classic, but their presence is a definitive marker of classic status. Notes are clearly a site of interest for any analysis concerned with interpretation and interpretative practices, as many notes specifically gloss a word or phrase in the text and so propose a particular meaning to the reader. But the interpretative possibilities of notes are not punctually confined to proposing particular senses of words or phrases; they may and do propose 'global'

rather than local readings and interpretative practices, as well as participating more generally in the constitution of the classic as category.

At first sight, notes appear very various. Lexicographical notes, glossing words or phrases within the text; notes which accompany narrative informants (places, events, people); those which acknowledge errors or editorial corrections which might be attributed to printer's error, authorial redrafting or slips and so on; a wide range of biographica; notes which identify cruces of scholarly contestation; those which provenance allusions. Nevertheless, it is possible to classify all of these into two broad categories, both of which can propose interpretative and reading contexts. The first are those notes which seek to recover or recuperate a meaning or value within the text, one that is assumed to be unavailable to the present-day reader. Lexicographical notes are the most obvious case. Thus the Everyman 1993 edition informs us that a 'ragout' means a 'meat and vegetable stew', and the Penguin 1996 that 'draughts' mean 'doses of medicine'.[97] But recuperative notes can also accompany narrative informants, again fulfilling the role of recovering what is presumed to be a lost meaning, knowledge or value. For example, the note to 'ragout' in the Penguin 1996 edition not only cites an OED definition ('a dish usually consisting of meat cut in small pieces, stewed with vegetables and highly seasoned') but comments that this is '[o]ne of several examples of the Hursts' sophisticated metropolitan tastes'.[98] This is presumably one of the many complex indices of values and behaviours in Austen's writing that Jones is concerned with. Recuperative notes attempt to position the prescribed present-day reader as the prescribed original or contemporaneous reader: an ideal reader who is assumed to have shared the intended meanings and values of the text. This repositioning of the contemporary reader asserts the text's fixity: it is the reader who 'moves'. The Penguin 1996 edition notes are, in the main consistent with the arguments of the introduction and are 'signed' by Vivien Jones. Indeed the notes are accompanied by a brief (seventeen line) introduction which takes issue with Tony Tanner the editor of the previous Penguin Classics edition who included only four notes on the grounds that the novel has an 'element of timelessness'.[99] Jones's notes are then a deliberate counter to this and continue the historicist reading of the text. The ragout note is just one of a number which classify characters in relation to 'metropolitan' fashion or plainer 'country' values, which in turn propose that characters are to be read symbolically and not simply 'literally'.[100]

The second type of note seeks to amplify or augment the prescribed contemporary reader's reading of the text in ways unavailable to the prescribed original reader. These notes offer the prescribed present-day reader the benefits or enrichments of subsequent scholarship. 'Enrichment' notes are most frequently those which supply biographical information about the author, but they may also supply information about errors or corrections and interpretative cruces. The Penguin 1996 edition enriches an allusive

reference to the picturesque by informing the reader that 'Jane Austen's brother Henry records that "at a very early age [Austen] was enamoured of Gilpin on the Picturesque"'.[101] The same edition, under the note to a particular instance of 'continue' informs us that 'in the first edition of the novel which belonged to Cassandra Austen, "continue" is corrected to "contrive" ... but it seems unnecessary to emend the more subtle expression of the original'.[102] This note is in one sense redundant - 'contrive' is not offered as an alternative. The rationale for not emending the original correction is that it is 'more subtle' - itself bound to a particular assessment of Austen's writing which proposes subtlety as one of its values. Even if it was Austen who made the less subtle change, the refusal to emend is somehow true to the 'spirit' of Austen, if not to the 'letter' with the editor functioning momentarily as the author's 'better' self. But what is proposed here, as with all notes, is the imperative 'read carefully'. If the difference between 'contrive' and 'continue' is important enough to warrant a note, the very least the prescribed reader can do is read attentively, which includes travelling between the novel and the notes when prompted. Both these enrichment notes demonstrate a particular kind of scholarly practice which confirms the editorial identity as such: the investigation of family correspondence in one case, a familiarity with the first edition in the other. But beyond this, the value of the text and of Austen's writing more generally is confirmed by the very fact that such an archive exists and is read and re-read. In both cases this is knowledge presumed to have been unavailable to the original reader and is dependent on subsequent scholarship: a scholarship which marks the value of the text and confirms its perenniality. The extent of scholarship, measured not only in volume but over time marks the interest that attests the text's enduring relevance. In the Everyman 1993 edition, this representation of a body of knowledge is proposed most strongly, not by the notes but by 'Jane Austen and Her Critics', a synoptic review of Austen criticism from 1812 to 1987 and the bibliography which follows it.[103]

Both types of note suggest reading contexts. Recuperative notes do acknowledge minor interpretative difficulties but these notes, which are few, function primarily in a contrastive role, to assert the text's overwhelming semantic fixity: that which is <u>not</u> noted. Thus the contrast between the Penguin's twenty three pages of notes and the Everyman's four is less interesting than the contrast between the Penguin's three hundred and eight pages of text and twenty three pages of notes. Indeed, recuperative notes affirm, in the very unequal division between the noted and not noted, the enduring relevance and interpretability of the text: the occasional semantic 'disruption' which confirms the text's interpretability in a contemporary context. This confirmation of the text as interpretable is supported by the ways in which notes in classics are presented as marginal. The very marginality of notes is one significant way in which the contradiction between enduring relevance and certain difficulties of interpretation is

negotiated: notes are not strictly necessary, precisely because the text does have enduring relevance.

The relation between what is noted and not noted needs to be understood in terms of a specific definition of literary language that recuperative, and in particular, lexicographical, notes reproduce. What is noted is that which is assumed to depart or deviate from the definition of the literary, which itself constitutes the unmarked or unnoted term of the binary. Most commonly, lexicographical notes accompany words or phrases of three types. The first are recognisably foreign words: 'ragout', 'Boulanger', 'quadrille'.[104] The second type are words or phrases from non-dominant varieties or dialects. These occur very rarely in Austen editions but are a feature of many other classics, for example: 'hurt: dialectal word for hurtleberry or whortleberry'; 'scroff: kindling (West country)'; 'belly timber: food (Yorkshire).[105] The third type comprises words or phrases from specialist or technical registers: legal, medical, architectural, agricultural and so on. In the case of Austen these are most frequently ecclesiastical, military, naval and above all domestic. These are the three types of word or phrase that are routinely assumed to present interpretative difficulty. By again focusing on the relations between the marked and the unmarked, a particular definition of literary language becomes visible. The marking of recognisably foreign words suggests a definition of literary language as a national language, one which, whatever its history, does not openly chronicle its relations with other national languages. The marking of non-dominant varieties establishes 'Standard English', the socially dominant variety, as the appropriate form for literary English. Taken together, the literary is defined as an idealisation of a national language which displaces the divisions and potential contestations suggested by non-dominant social and geographical varieties by constructing the dominant variety, in this case Standard English, as the norm of literary language. The third type of lexicographical note - that which accompanies specialist or technical registers - is the most interesting. The indexing of terms from technical registers indicates an understanding of these as specialised, utilitarian and demarcatable zones of language use. By contrast, literary language is that which is not a specialised and demarcatable zone, it is that which is common to and interpretable by all readers. It is shared, common and interpretable because it is not 'narrowly' circumscribed by or measurable in terms of a particular use or function. Literary language is defined as 'register-free' in the sense that registers are always 'constrained' by purpose and a specifiable and limited constituency of users. It is stable and transhistorical: its meanings are available because its preoccupations and overarching referent - the essentially national-human - is deemed to be shared with all implied readers. This definition of the literary's referent as the national-human is a paradoxical but familiar construction of humanist literary criticism - Leavis is a 'classic' case.[106] Here, it is a specific effect of the defining distinction between the literary and

the non-literary: where the literary specifies both an ideal national language, from which the markedly foreign is marked out as 'other', and a zone of practice not circumscribed by a specifiable use or constituency of users which transcends social and cultural specificity.

The definition of literary language inscribed in classics dissolves the difference between contemporaneous and contemporary reader, which notes partially acknowledge. Interpretative difficulty is sited in the non-literary. Foreign languages, non-dominant varieties and technical registers are permitted to present interpretative difficulties because these are not constituents of the literary. The very act of noting such elements functions as a kind of excision which asserts the separability of the literary from the non-literary. Whilst the literary is transhistorical and open to all readers, the non-literary is historical and restrictive. The historical situation of the reader is construed as contingent and secondary: the knowledges of the reading moment - 'then' or 'now' - are a matter of chance but these knowledges do not disrupt the processes of the interpretation of the literary. Enrichment notes frequently corroborate this distinction between the literary and the non-literary. What is most noticeable is how many propose an authorial classification, specifically organised by the author-function. 'Continue' / 'contrive' is one such, predicated on an oeuvre and an archive, but others propose more particular reading contexts. The note accompanying 'transport' in the Penguin 1996 edition speculates that:

> Elizabeth's outburst in favour of nature rather than humanity is perhaps, a relic of *First Impressions*, which might have been a more explicitly satirical novel along the lines of *Northanger Abbey*.[107]

In the same vein, the note accompanying a reference to Edward Street informs us that this was also a venue in an early work of Austen's, *Lady Susan*. The mention of a governess in *Pride and Prejudice* prompts an allusion to *Emma* and the mention of a shrubbery prompts a reference to Fanny in *Mansfield Park*. *Mansfield Park* is also mentioned in the Everyman 1993 in a note which elaborates the distinction between 'natural beauty' and 'awkward taste'.[108] Each of these assert the author as a context for reading. The outburst containing transport is the most interesting. The note acknowledges a genre shift but explains it exclusively through an appeal to the authorial: the trace of the first version of the novel. The possible interpretative issues raised by the shift are dispatched by the explanatory force of the authorial.

The relationship between the noted and the not-noted is a central key to understanding how the contradiction between enduring relevance and interpretative difficulty is negotiated in classics publishing. Interpretative difficulties are acknowledged but marginalised, not only in the position of notes and their number, but because notes recover or account for meanings, values and knowledges which are

defined as non-literary. The distinction between the literary and the non-literary constructs the literary as an enduring zone of semantic fixity: a zone which is shared by all readers, contemporaneous and contemporary.

7. Conclusions

As suggested in the introduction, 'pastness' is both a central and ambiguous accentuality in the constitution of the classic. This may be marked in a range of ways: the contemporaneous cover images of paperback editions, the contemporaneously styled illustrations of the Folio, the inclusion of facsimile title pages (which also propose the text as historical artefact), the noting practices, the inclusion of life and times chronologies and historically sequenced critical extracts. This pastness is distinct from the period quality proposed by the in-costume cover photograph of the tie-in edition where what is signified most strongly is a type of text: period drama. Pastness here is an index of value. While 'period-ness' is a distinctively modern pleasure which draws a sharp distinction between past and present, the pastness of the classic is a marker of its perdurance which renders the text always-already contemporary. Yet at the same time this pastness can pose interpretative difficulties, the text is, in certain respects, opaque. This opacity is a necessary condition of the classic, for it is finally revealed as superficial and superseded by a definitive legibility. This process is most clearly visible in the parts of the editional apparatus which most strongly acknowledge this apparent opacity: notes and introductions. In the former, the constitution of the literary and non-literary distinction where the literary is the majority zone of unmarked semantic stability. In the case of introductions, misunderstanding and misreading are readily acknowledged but a correct reading or a richer and truer one is offered as the stable and authoritative alternative to error and ignorance. Crucially, this misunderstanding is always characterised in relation to the reader (immature, in the case of Church; incapable of reading ironically, in Conrad; in knowledge-deficit, in Jones). The interpretative difficulties that the text poses are not finally present in the text itself. This is particularly noticeable in Conrad. His focus on irony as the key to the text's meaning might appear to acknowledge interpretative difficulties in the text itself; but irony, on his account, is the simplest of figures to decipher. Although Jones's solution is more complex, it is still the prescribed reader of the edition who is likely to misinterpret the text, the contemporaneous reader is presumed to have had no such problem. In all cases, the text is clear, lucid and intelligible, it is our understanding of it which is or is potentially at fault, but this can be remedied.

The pastness that is constituted by classics publishing has a distinctive relation with particular concepts of the literary which is most explicit in the interpretative and reading practices proposed. As I suggested in the introduction to this chapter, Austen presents

an interesting case-study because much of her writing is represented as both literary and popular, in a particular sense. The strongest reading context proposed in these editions is authorial. On occasion the authorial context proposes explicatory contexts (most strongly in Church, and also to some extent in Jones). But what is most fundamentally proposed is evaluation, an evaluation most strongly committed to the proposition that the text is unique. From the blurb of the Penguin 1996 cover which cites and signs Austen's own evaluation of Elizabeth Bennet; through the design of the author-text conjunction in the two paperback classic editions; the centrality of the author as life and/or works in notes; the Everyman's life-and-times chronology, which is ordered by the left hand page - 'Chronology of Jane Austen's Life' - and which can include no literary or historical event prior to her birth or subsequent to her death; to the introductions which all render the author as the central category. In the case of both Church and Conrad, the strongest effect of the authorial context is to weaken or even block interpretations and readings which are bound to concepts such as genre and narrative. Jones's introduction is different in this sense: contemporaneous discourses are proposed as central to understanding the novel's narrative form. But Austen does not simply replicate romance conventions, the argument continues, she deliberately deploys them for her own ends to make a particular argument. In all cases, the uniqueness of the text is foregrounded, reinscribing its status and suggesting a generalised literary reading practice. This is best summarised as a negative injunction: do not read for the plot.

In the Everyman 1993 and Penguin 1996 editions, the plot or significant parts of it are everywhere represented. The blurb of the latter does not simply present a scenario and establish the hermeneutic code of enigmas, it reveals the ending.[109] Both Conrad's and Jones's introduction elaborate much of the plot: in the first four pages of the Everyman, most of its substance is elaborated.[110] Church's references to the story are more oblique, but the prescribed reader is left in no doubt as to the novel's resolution, as the three Bennet marriages which take place in the novel are all listed.[111] 'Giving away the ending' is, of course, a staple of literary-critical practice where the strong assumption, not always warranted, is that the prescribed reader is familiar with the text under discussion - and besides, the object of study requires representation. But in the context of an edition, the meanings of such representations are inflected somewhat differently. The Folio edition may want to assume a reader who is painstakingly assembling a library which includes old favourites but the Everyman 1993 and Penguin 1996 editions do not. We may read the introduction after we have read the novel, or we may not read it at all, but it is strongly proposed as a pre-text. In the case of *Pride and Prejudice*, revealing the story obviously proposes the text as a familiar object. The reader may not have read the text but she will know something about it, or she should. As is often the case, nothing confirms the existence of a

strong convention more than its breaking. On page fifteen of the introduction to the Penguin 1998 edition of Mary Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*, a sensation novel first published in the early 1860s the reader is offered the following warning:

> Note: if you do not wish to discover Lady Audley's secret, read the rest of the introduction after you have finished the novel.[112]

What is most interesting about this practice of telling the story is the generalised literary reading practice it proposes, which is the opposite of reading for the plot. Within the terms of this discursive opposition, to read for the plot is to be exclusively concerned with what happens next and to whom. It is above all to read 'literally', and in the process, we may speed, skim and skip. The end is definitive and exhausts any further interest in the book. To read for the literary is to background our concern with what Elizabeth Bennet did next. It is to read carefully, slowly, attentively, respectfully: for to read in this way confers respect and confirms the novel's authority over us. It is to traverse beyond the literal to the higher generalities of the symbolic: nothing is ever simply or even primarily what it seems: everything requires transposition to another plane of meaning. The text is never exhausted by any or all of its readings, it is finally a surfeit: one reason to re-read it. In the case of *Pride and Prejudice*, the multiple representations of the plot have a further function. The novel is 'popular' or 'well-loved', the latter suggesting a degree of feeling rather than mass popularity. In the case of the well-loved classic, these multiple representations conjoin two types of reader: the serious reader for whom the story is of minimal interest, and the popular reader, the lover and re-reader of Austen who knows very well what happens next. It is a surface resolution: to know what happens next does not mean that the pleasures of the plot are exhausted. The chapter summary which accompanies the on-line version of *Pride and Prejudice* at *Austen.com*, for example, introduces its summaries as designed for people 'who are familiar with the book to help them find the chapter they want', suggesting a re-reading which is significantly shaped by the story.[113]

Yet the literary and the popular cannot have equal force: more than just a story, more than mere romance. And it is interesting in this context that neither Church nor Conrad invoke the romance narrative.[114] Indeed, the introductions all dispatch a popular reading: Jones insists that we cannot read the novel as we might read romance, Church's contrast of the immature first and mature second reading, and most obviously perhaps, Conrad, with his argument that everyone has misunderstood the text and his association of the popular with the Hollywood error of locating the adaptation in the Victorian period.[115] This counter to the popular is also inscribed more diffusely in the edition as a whole. The Everyman 1993 and Penguin 1996, as noted above, evidence a particular form of contemporary classics publishing where the relations with higher

education are central to the classic's production, distribution and sales. The choice of named editors and their representation within editions, the marked inscription of scholarly practices within the apparatus, and the incorporation of critical and contextual materials, all propose the text as an object of serious study. The Everyman 1993 edition not only most explicitly prescribes a student reader, but also a student writer: the edition is a one-stop-shop for an essay, complete with text summary and critical extracts. Editing and marketing conjoin here as the dominant publishing processes. But the apparently seamless relation between this mode of classics publishing and higher education, which supplies both editorial labour and purchasing and reading constituencies, can also generate tensions in the definition and representation of the classic. Jones's introduction definitively challenges the perenniality of the novel (except as a pleasurable romance), which the rest of the apparatus seeks to persuade us of: historicist reading, which has become central to contemporary literary criticism, conflicts with the established practices of classics publishing. In the case of the Folio, with its minimal apparatus, the seriousness of the text is proposed very differently and most strongly through production practices. It is in the production values of the edition itself - the weight and quality of the paper, the illustrations and chapter decorations, the overall design - that the seriousness and value of the text is most strongly inscribed. These features seek to challenge the book conceived as just another commodity of mass consumption: it deserves a more fitting embodiment. This likewise proposes its seriousness and is congruent with the self-representation of the Folio Society as a whole where potential purchasers are addressed as members who may visit its premises to sit and peruse the books in a comfortable reading room, echoing the traditions of a London club.[116] But beyond this and perhaps most strongly, the production values valorise the text as furniture and decor.

The negative imperative not to read for the plot and its positive corollaries show that classics publishing of this type prioritises the evaluative modality of reading. In Austen's case, this takes the specific form of reconfirming the text's value. It is not necessary to argue that the text and the author have value, this is presupposed and reconfirmed by the practices of the edition.[117] An acknowledgement of the text's value is the prequel or pre-text for any reading of it. This evaluative practice precedes and orders interpretation, and applies to both the editor and the prescribed reader. Their relations to the text, however, are different. Both accept the value of the text without question and reproduce its authority, but the reader must also submit to the authority of the editor. Indeed the very possibilities of misreading that introductions and notes in particular acknowledge increase the reader's dependence; such opacities are always finally resolved as merely apparent, but they cast a shadow of doubt, a doubt which can never concern the text, only the reader.

[1] Italo Calvino, 'Why Read the Classics?' in *The Literature Machine* (London: Picador, 1989), p.125.

[2] One recent example of the 'precarious' classic is *Isabella Whitney, Mary Sidney and Aemilia Lanyer: Renaissance Poets* (Penguin: London, 2000). In the case of much marginalised writing which finally finds its way to the centre, the strong suggestion is that the text was in some sense 'lost' and has now been 're-discovered'.

[3] T. S. Eliot, *What is a Classic?* (London: Faber and Faber, 1945), p.10. Eliot does not however offer a definition of maturity, but '... if we are properly mature, as well as educated persons, we can recognise maturity' (p.10).

[4] See Marilyn Butler, 'Introduction' to *Northanger Abbey* (London: Penguin, 1995), especially pp.xiv-xv.

[5] Foucault, 'What is an Author?' in *Language-Counter-memory-Practice* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977. See in particular p.128 where Foucault elaborates the strategies by which authors are defined and the assumptions which underlie these: 'The author explains the presence of certain events within a text, as well as their transformations, distortions and their various modifications ... The author also constitutes a principle of unity in writing where any unevenness of production is ascribed to changes caused by evolution, maturation or outside influence. In addition the author serves to neutralise the contradictions that are found in a series of texts ... Finally, the author is a particular source of expression who, in more or less finished forms, is manifested equally well and with similar validity, in a text, in letters, fragments, drafts and so forth.'

[6] For example: the BBC television adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, directed by Simon Langton (UK: BBC/Arts and Entertainment Network, 1995); *Sense and Sensibility*, directed by Ang Lee (USA/UK: Columbia, 1995); *Emma*, directed by Douglas McGrath (UK: Haft Entertainment/Matchmaker Films/Mirimax, 1996); *Mansfield Park*, directed by Patricia Rozema (USA/UK: BBC Films/Mirimax, 1998). There are also two contemporary adaptations: *Metropolitan*, directed by Whit Stilman (USA: New Line/Westerley Film and Video, 1990) which situates *Mansfield Park* in the 1980s New York debutante scene, and *Clueless*, directed by Amy Heckerling (US:

Paramount, 1995), a contemporary adaptation of *Emma* set in a high school. Emma Tennant has written two sequels to *Pride and Prejudice*, *Pemberley* (Sevenoaks: Hodder and Stoughton, 1993) and *An Unequal Marriage* (London: Sceptre, 1995). There are a number of major Austen websites including *The Republic of Pemberley* - the legend of which runs: 'Your haven in a world programmed to misunderstand obsession with things Austen' - *Austen.com* and *Austen-LArchives*. The first two run highly active fan-fiction sites. *Austen.com* encourages two carefully distinguished types: 'Epilogue Abbey' stories written out of the novels and set within the historical period and 'Fantasia Gallery', which as the title suggests, is where anything goes, for example: '*Something in the Rain* by Mary Collette. In the wine country of California, Lizzy Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy come in to conflict as she advocates for the workers and he owns a large vineyard'. It is also interesting that the majority of the fan fiction texts are written out of *Pride and Prejudice*. In the Fantasia Gallery at *Austen.com* for example, as of July 12 2001, out of a total of 205 stories, 168 are based on *Pride and Prejudice*, though it is often fused with other novels and films.

[7] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Penguin, 1995); Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Everyman, 1993); Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Penguin, 1996); Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Folio Society, 1957/1975). As it is the apparatus and not the text which is the focus, I will refer in both the body text and footnotes to the editions: "Folio'. 'Penguin 1995', 'Penguin 1996' and so on.

[8] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Sceptre, 1995).

[9] This classification also seems to generate redundancies: is the definition of a classic not precisely a function of its endurance?

[10] Richard Dixon, *Rhetoric* (London: Methuen, 1971), p.24. Dixon's account of the rules and practices of classical rhetoric draw predominantly on Cicero, in particular his *De Inventione* (p.21). In *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (California: California University Press, 1968), Richard A. Lanham defines antonomasia as 'the substitution of a descriptive phrase for a proper name' (p.12).

[11] This also distinguishes discussions of antonomasia and other cognate concepts from the concept of cohesion as developed by M. A. K. Halliday and Rukaiya Hassan in *Cohesion in English* (Harlow:

Longman, 1976). Antonomasia can of course produce cohesive effects but my concern here is with the interpretative practices which such substitutions suggest.

[12] On the division of the faculties of rhetoric, see Dixon, *Rhetoric*, pp.24-35.

[13] See appendix A.

[14] The painting is *Congratulations* by George Henry Harlow whose dates are 1787-1819.

[15] The Everyman motto is 'Everyman, I will go with thee and be thy guide'. The aims of the Everyman Library are represented by a narrative of naming: 'The Everyman Library was founded by J. M. Dent in 1906. He chose the name Everyman because he wanted to make available the best books ever written in every field to the greatest number of people at the cheapest possible price'. The narrative also explains the logo, a small oval which frames a pilgrim, 'the character in "Everyman", a medieval mystery play, a proud link between Everyman past and present'.

[16] Everyman 1993, p.313.

[17] Different parts of the editorial apparatus would seem to address different types of student reader. The text summary perhaps addressing a school reader, the summary of Austen criticism and the suggestions for further reading addressing university students.

[18] R. W. Chapman's edition of *The Novels of Jane Austen* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923) is usually thought to be the first serious scholarly edition of Austen's writing. It was itself revised but 'all recent editions have either been based on Chapman's text or acknowledge debts to it' (Penguin 1996, p.xxix.).

[19] For an example, see appendix A.

[20]. These illustrations are on p.94, p.201 and p.273 respectively.

[21] The figure is approximate because the prices of editions vary considerably.

[22] Sue Birtwhistle and Suzy Conkin, *The Making of Pride and Prejudice*, (London: Penguin/BBC books, 1995).

[23] Penguin 1996, pp.xxix-xxxii.

[24] This practice is not, of course, exclusive to classics publishing. Faber, the British poetry publisher, employs similar practices in many of its cover designs. Probably the most well known instance of this is the front cover design where a title and author box is framed on a 'wallpaper' of

stylised double lower-case 'f's (representing Faber and Faber). See for example, T. S. Eliot, *The Wasteland and Other Poems* (1940) (London: Faber, 1983).

[25] The force of the romance narrative within the 1995 BBC adaptation and its reception as such is formally exemplified in Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (London: Picador, 1996}. Not only is the plot modelled on *Pride and Prejudice* - with the hero of the novel also called (Mark) Darcy - but Bridget is fixated by the BBC television series and in particular the hero: '10.30am. Jude called and we spend twenty minutes growling, "Fawaw, that Mr Darcy." I love the way he talks, sort of as if he can't be bothered. *Ding-Dong*!. Then we had a long discussion about the comparative merits of Mr Darcy and Mark Darcy, both agreeing that Mr Darcy was more attractive because he was ruder but being imaginary was a disadvantage that could not be overlooked.' (p.247). The recent film adaptation of the novel directed by Sharon Maguire (USA: Mirimax/Studio/Canal/Universal/Working Title, 2001), cast Colin Firth (who played Fitzwilliam Darcy in the tv adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*) as Mark Darcy.

[26] To anyone with some knowledge of Austen's narratives however, the Everyman choice seems perverse. The cover image most strongly suggests a two sisters narrative, very appropriate for *Sense and Sensibility* but certainly not for *Pride and Prejudice.* Some images are far more explicitly interpretative of the text or some aspect of it. The Penguin classic edition of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (London: Penguin, 1998) features a reproduction of Dante Gabriel Rosetti's 'Monna Vanna', a painting of a classically Pre-Raphaelite women richly and exotically attired. What is interesting here is how the reading of the novel and the introduction proposes particular senses for the painting. In the novel, there is crucial scene where a painting of Lady Audley in Pre-Raphaelite mode is described and viewed; Lady Audley is also a conspicuous consumer of jewels, furs and the like. Because of this, the choice of the painting seems explicitly motivated and the woman in the image comes to signify, not Lady Audley as such, but a look and style which the reader associates with her.

[27] Or at least default or unmodified classics do not. One feature of Penguin Twentieth Century Classics series is an unframed, usually photographic image on the front cover. The interpretative possibilities are however, likewise, oblique. The cover image of the edition of Jean Rhys's *Wide*

Sargasso Sea (London: Penguin, 2000), for example, is a green tinted photograph of three bananas lying on a piece of matting.

[28] In contrast, both the fiction editions mentioned above do bleed: there are no borders.

[29] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.9.

[30] The Society also publishes a magazine, *Folio*, four times a year which includes features on forthcoming publications. Again there is a frequent emphasis on illustration which foregrounds the artisanal. For example the Summer 2001 issue of *Folio* included an article by Steven Devine entitled 'Once more over the Orwell' on how he illustrated the Folio George Orwell.

[31] Arthur Conan Doyle, *Complete Stories of Sherlock Holmes* (London: Folio Society: 1993) It was in fact an American play, *Sherlock Holmes*, written by actor-manager William Gillett and based on the first and last of Conan Doyle's Holmes short stories ('A Scandal in Bohemia' and 'The Final Problem') which first introduced the deerstalker hat and the curved meerschaum pipe which later became the signatures of the Holmes profile. See Christopher Frayling, 'The Greatest Shaggy Dog Story Ever Told', *The Independent on Sunday*, 1 July 2001, 'Life Etc.', p.8.

[32] 'One of the most perfect, most pleasurable and most subtle - and therefore, perhaps, most dangerously persuasive - of romantic love stories' (Penguin 1996, back cover). I will discuss the back cover text of this edition in detail below.

[33] The use of locutions such as 'dominant cultural discourses' or later in this section 'predominantly conceived' and 'dominant judgement' is, I am aware, vulnerable to criticism. A reasonable critical response - but where's the evidence? - is easily proffered. It is more difficult to address the criticism that such locutions homogenise cultural practices. I hope that the use of dominant and predominant here suggests or at least gestures to a relationship between discourses not all of which reproduce these positions.

[34] One of the most important of these is Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women Patriarchy and Popular Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984/91). This utilises structuralist and psychoanalytic concepts of narrative as well as empirical research into the reading practices of a group of romance readers in the Midwestern US town of Smithton to explore the role of romance narratives in their lives. Radway cites P. J. Fennell who directed the early stages of the

development of Silhouette (the Simon and Schuster romance imprint) on his conception of popular romance novels: 'Readers of books of this kind ask not, "have I heard of this book?" but, "Did I enjoy the last dozen Silhouettes?"' (p.43). This illustrates one of the key differences between the individual text with a particular reputation and the multiple and substitutable romance.

[35] The fixed phrase 'period charm' is a staple in estate-agents copy. 'Eligible' may sometimes have a more serious and positive accentuality (as in *The Tatler* example mentioned above).

[36] Only one of the blurbs mentions Mr Darcy's first name: the Everyman. However the Sceptre edition is potentially ambiguous, referring only to 'Darcy' and allowing for the possibility of this being understood as the character's first name. This possibility of error is strengthened because Darcy's name appears in a conjunctive phrase with 'Elizabeth'. The Sceptre edition is, I would argue, deliberately ambiguous, an attempt to resolve a potential archaism which would conflict with the modernising idiom of much of the synopsis, for example 'before wedding bells chime'. In this context it is worth noting that many of the contemporary fan-fiction narratives of *Pride and Prejudice* 'modernise' the hero's name to William (from Fitzwilliam).

[37] The heading to the blurb strengthens the comedy classification by describing the novel as 'Jane Austen's elegant and witty social comedy'.

[38] See for example, James Baldwin, *Another Country* (London: Penguin Twentieth Century Classics, 1990).

[39] Folio (1957), p.5.

[40] Folio (1957), p.7.

[41] The examples in parenthesis come from Richard Church (Folio, 1957), p8; Peter Conrad (Everyman, 1993), p.14; Vivien Jones (Penguin, 1996), p.x respectively.

[42] Folio (1957), pp.8-9.

[43] Folio (1957), p.9.

[44] Folio (1957), p.5.

[45] Folio (1957), p.5.

[46] Folio (1957), p.6.

[47] For example Vivien Jones's citation of George Steiner: 'At the height of political and industrial revolution ... Miss Austen composes novels almost extra-territorial to history'. Jones describes Steiner's comments as 'myopic' (Penguin, 1996, px). Likewise both Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City* (London: Hogarth, 1985) and Marilyn Butler in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) critique the representation of Austen as unengaged with the political and social context in which she is writing.

[48] Folio (1957), p.5.

[49] Folio (1957), pp.5-7.

[50] Folio (1957), p.8.

[51] Folio (1957), p.8.

[52] Everyman (1993), p.xiii.

[53] Everyman (1993), p.xiii: 'But instead of decoding the ironist's mysteries and deciphering these remarks by turning them into their opposites - for Jane Austen's is an extended, exploratory, dangerously subversive art, and is neither harmlessly decorative nor picturesquely provincial - critics have taken her at her word.'

[54] Everyman (1993), p.vii.

[55] Everyman (1993), p.xiii.

[56] Everyman (1993), p.xiv.

[57] Everyman (1993), pp.xiv-xv.

[58] Everyman (1993), for example: p.xiii, p.xviii, p.xv, p.xxviii, p.xxviii.

[59] Everyman (1993), p.xiii.

[60] Everyman (1993), p.xiv.

[61] For example, Elizabeth 'acknowledges this kinship with Lydia when the latter condemns Mary King's nasty freckles: the ugly sentiment was "little other than her own breast had formerly harboured and fancied liberal"' (p.xx). Also: 'Grim inevitabilities are overcome by happily sacrificing oneself to them: thus Mr Bennet nominates Wickham as his favourite son-in-law. Elizabeth has inherited this philosophical pessimism from her father' (p.xix).

[62] Everyman (1993), p.xiii.

[63] Everyman (1993), p.xiv.

[64] This claim would seem to be supported by the fact that Jones's introduction, discussed below does supply biographical information, even though a biographical sketch precedes it.

[65] Everyman (1993): pp.xvii-xviii (Sterne, Defoe, Joyce, Shakespeare, Dickens, Swift), p.xxviii (Wordsworth Byron) and p.xxii (James).

[66] Everyman (1993), p.xxviii, p.xvii and p.xxii.

[67] Everyman (1993), p.xvii.

[68] Everyman (1993). See for example p.xvi where Austen's 'victims' (characters) are described as 'safe in their resilient obtuseness'.

[69] Having said this, it is clear that Conrad has an 'English' tradition in view which owes much to Leavis and in particular *The Great Tradition* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973).

[70] Everyman (1993), p.xxviii.

[71] There is one other place where historical interpretations surface as a possibility. This is on the first page where Conrad criticises the 1940 Hollywood adaptation of the film: '[i]t is significant that the MGM film of the novel should have shifted the work's period forward from the panic of the Regency's preparations for war with France ... to the less anxious, more opulent, frilled and crinolined Victorian era.' Here the serious argument is seemingly undermined by the focus on the frills of Victoriana: 'crinolines slow Elizabeth down' (p.xii).

[72] For example: 'And in this introduction I will be focusing primarily on Austen's immediate social, political and fictional context' (p.viii); and, '... I want to go on now to explore in more detail ...' (p.xii), Penguin, 1996.

[73] The predominant classification is as a novel by Austen, and 'Austen's novels' is one form of this (p.xi). The authorial classification is also strongly marked in representations of Austen's agency as a writer: for example 'Austen provides' (p.vii), 'Austen's deployment' (p.ix), 'Austen depicts' (p.xxiii). The novel is explicitly discussed as a romance (pp.vii-x); as a political novel (pp.x-xxvii); as a late-eighteenth/early nineteenth century novel, for example, pp.xii-xvii; as a novel by a woman writer, for example, p.xii; and as a popular classic, p.viii.

[74] Penguin (1996), p.vii.

[75] Penguin (1995), all the above pp.vii-ix.

[76] Penguin (1996), p.vii and p.ix.

[77] Of the forty two women whom Radway interviewed, thirty two chose the happy ending as one of the top three ingredients of a romance, the highest score accorded to any feature (p.67).

[78] Penguin (1996), pp.ix-x.

[79] Penguin (1996), p.viii.

[80] Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author', *Language-Counter-memory-Practice* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1977), p.123.

[81] Penguin (1996), pp.viii-ix.

[82] Penguin (1996), p.viii.

[83] Penguin (1996), p.xi.

[84] Penguin (1996), pp.xii-xvii.

[85] 'Rational' is discussed on p.xvii and 'elegant' on p.xviii.

[86] Penguin (1996), p.xi.

[87] Penguin (1996), p.xi.

[88] Penguin (1996), p.xxvi.

[89] Penguin (1996), p.xxvi.

[90] Penguin (1996), pp.xi-xii. The reference to the page reference for this moment in the novel is typical of Jones's scholarly practice.

[91] Penguin (1996), see in particular pp.xiii-xviii.

[92] Penguin (1996), p.x.

[93] Church names her as 'Jane' seven times and four times as 'Jane Austen': for example, 'Jane's grandfather' (p.6); 'Jane was born' (p.6); '... Jane revised a book written earlier ...' (p.8).

[94] Everyman (1993), pp.xiv-v.

[95] Marriage as a theme is the way that Church represents the matter that Jones classifies as romance. Folio 1957, p.9: By the time the novel is resolved, 'marriage has been examined from many points of view, including its most base (Lydia and Wickham), its most innocent (Jane and Bingley), and its most deeply spiritual'.

[96] This same intimacy is asserted in the naming of the designer in the Folio edition although the Folio Society have taken this further in one of their complete leather-bound Shakespeare editions where members could have their own initials stitched into the spine of each volume.

[97] Everyman (1993), p.294; Penguin (1996), p.323.

[98] Penguin (1996), p.323.

[99] Jones cites Tanner on p.315 of the Penguin 1996 edition.

[100] For example on p.323: '*Cheapside*: in the City of London and therefore unfashionable and associated with trade. The implicit contrast is with the new residential areas around Oxford Street'. (This is where Jane Bennet stays when she visits London). Or its complement on p.328: 'Grosvenor Street: just south of Oxford Street, in the fashionable residential area of London'. (This is where the Bingleys stay in London.)

[101] Penguin (1996), p.331. Likewise in the Penguin 1981 edition of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall,* where the note which accompanies the mention of a painter's easel informs us that 'Anne Brontë, like her sisters and brother, was a competent artist' (p.499). The issue here is not that the prescribed present day reader does not know what a painter's easel is - this is assumed as shared knowledge - but rather that this biographical information will in some sense enrich the prescribed reader's reading of the text. Here, the reader is asked to forge a connection between the heroine of the novel, whose easel it is, and the author. This is one of the many notes in this edition which strongly suggests a biographical reading of the novel, a reading which adopts the conventional Brontë-Bell narrative of familial relations and treats the Brontës as a single author function.

[102] Penguin (1996), p.321.

[103] Everyman (1993), pp.298-312.

[104] All from the Penguin 1996 edition: ragout - p.323; Boulanger - p.319; quadrille - p.325.

[105] 'Hurt' from E. M. Forster, *A Room with a View* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p.248. 'Scroff' from Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p.492. 'Belly-timber' from Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), p.512.

[106] There are many possible examples here but perhaps one of the best is Leavis's attempt to configure Joseph Conrad as an English writer in *The Great Tradition.* As Conrad had the possibility of writing in

French, Leavis contends that: 'Conrad's themes and interests demanded the concreteness and action - the dramatic energy - of English'. The positive attributes of English make an interesting contrast with the implicit characteristics of French: lacking in clarity, purpose and force and, finally unmasculine. See F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, 2nd edition (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973), p.17. For a superlative account of the social specificities that structure Leavis's 'human', see Francis Mulhern, 'English Reading' in *Nation and Narration* , edited by Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), pp.250-264.

[107] Penguin (1996), p.329.

[108] Penguin (1996): 'Edward Street' - p.333; 'governess' - p.329; 'shrubbery' - p.327. Everyman (1993): 'natural beauty' - p.181.

[109] Roland Barthes, *S/Z* , (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), p.19: 'Under the hermeneutic code, we list the various (formal) terms by which an enigma can be distinguished, suggested, formulated, held in suspense and finally disclosed.'

[110] Everyman (1993), pp.xiii-xvii .

[111] Folio (1957), p.9.

[112] Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret* (London: Penguin, 1998), p.15. The introduction is written by Jenny Bourne Taylor.

[113] See Austen.com: http://www.austen.com/pride/. The summaries are also described as 'designed to be very vague and cryptic' and they are. For example: 'Volume I, Chapter IV -- After the assembly. One Miss Bennet is already smitten'; 'Volume II, chapter IX (32) -- A gentleman finds a lady alone at Hunsford. What is fifty miles of good road. You can not have been always at Longbourn'. These coded representations are explicitly 'not designed for the student who might be looking for a quick way to get out of reading the novel' (my emphasis).

[114] Everyman (1993). Conrad, in his character-centred fashion, does antonomastically represent Elizabeth and Darcy as 'the lovers' on occasion (for example p.xiii), but the challenge that Darcy poses to Elizabeth is conceived in terms of irony: '[f]or the ironist Elizabeth, Darcy represents the most alluring of challenges ... '(p.xx).

[115] Everyman (1993), p.xiii.

[116] The Folio Society is based at 44 Eagle Street, London WCIR.

[117] This is clearly not the case with all classics. The blurb of the Penguin 1998 edition of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*, a sensation novel of the early 1860's, begins by announcing that the novel has 'weather[ed] critical scorn'.[117] The introduction never makes the case for its literary value, arguing that its predominant interest is as a historical document. See Jenny Bourne Taylor's introduction, .in particular pp.xxi-xxv and pp.xxv-xxxiii.

Chapter Six: The Case of Literary Theory Textbooks

> When it was proclaimed that the library contained all books, the first impression was of extravagant happiness (Jorge Luis Borges)[1]

1. What is a textbook?

Textbooks are a ubiquitous category in educational and academic publishing. Whilst in science, law and accountancy, textbooks have long been the primary prescribed reading matter for particular subjects and courses in higher education, in Britain, the literary studies textbook is a recent innovation. Fuelled in significant part by the un(der)funded expansion of student numbers in tertiary education in the 1990s, which severely constrained student and institutional expenditure on books and journals, textbook publishing has become the staple practice of many academic publishers, as an increasing range of knowledges have been encompassed by its rubrics. I am interested here in a particular type of literary studies textbook - that representing the object that has come to be called 'Literary Theory', or sometimes just 'Theory' - and in two modalities of its representation, Introductions and Readers.[2] Introductions explicitly prescribe a student reader who is unfamiliar with the subject matter, and its representations of texts, topics and concepts are substantially governed by an attempt to facilitate the student reader's understanding. Readers bundle together original texts or extracts according to authorial, thematic or disciplinary identities. Like textbooks, Readers have a long history. And the extracting of texts, abridged or not, into Readers or digests, is not unique to educational publishing. Digests of various kinds, frequently fiction, were an important and profitable area of publishing in eighteenth century France and a digest was commonly referred to as a bibliothèque or library.[3] In Britain, 'Reader' had acquired the pedagogic sense of a book containing passages for instruction or reading practice by the end of the eighteenth century.[4] In contemporary textbook form, the Reader does not inscribe the student's knowledge deficit as explicitly as Introductions but the negotiation of possible, indeed probable, interpretative difficulties are a feature of both. Whilst classics represent the text as an object that is or ought to be familiar to the prescribed reader, the textbook makes no such assumption. That said, the subject or field of the textbook is always represented as not simply extant but established. The prescribed reader of the literary theory textbook is positioned at the beginning of a story which is always-already written. But the writer of this story is not the author or editor as such. Her/his position is, in the main, constituted as a representative of the field in question, not an author but an inhabitant of the discursive world that the textbook represents, and this is the rationale for their authority. Their legitimacy is confirmed and adjudicated by the culture of discourse that s/he participates in. The practices of peer review of manuscripts, post-

publication review and 'adoption' are all instances where the field as 'adjudicator' asserts itself.

What makes literary theory textbooks a particularly interesting case is their permutation of a multiplicity of languages, a historically and culturally various heteroglossia encompassing numerous modes of writing - biography, history, philosophy, literary criticism, poetry, drama, novels - instantiated in a range of generically specific forms - inscribed in and alongside metatextual and conceptual commentary and often explicit pedagogic instruction and explicit editorial rationales. Some of these languages are marked out as attributable utterances by conventions - of typography, italicisation, indentation, quotation marks - or/and particular lexical formulations; many are not. Practices of attribution range from the explicit and elaborate to the most casual mention. Readers and Introductions are similar in their permutation of this multiplicity, but whilst Introductions represent other texts predominantly through the modalities of reported speech - both indirect and free indirect - Readers reproduce original texts or extended extracts in direct form as 'citation'. In doing this, Readers incorporate a further intertextual dimension, when the sometimes multiple previous publishing contexts are inscribed in permissions, titling procedures and footnotes. Whilst the representation of particular texts and authors is a staple of Readers and Introductions, equally if not more important is the representation of a body of discourse and its relations. Whilst the reading practices proposed by classics are oriented to the particular text and the particular author, Readers and Introductions propose particular intertextual relations between texts, authors and theories, particular orders and priorities of reading and it is these relations and the interpretative and reading possibilities they delimit that I am concerned with here: how such books propose that we read 'Theory'.

The central aim of the analysis is both to elaborate these possibilities, and to show how these are governed by the particular practices which constitute the publishing category. What is particularly interesting are the ways in which Readers and Introductions explicitly propose intertextual relations as central to reading. The textbook as a general category is firstly ordered by accessibility: a criterion - for incorporation and representation - a goal - facilitating the reader's understanding of the subject matter - and a value. It is accessibility which accounts for one of the most distinctive features of textbooks: their many modes of translation. Many of the texts represented in literary theory textbooks are translated from other national languages: French, most frequently, but also German and to a lesser extent, Russian. Further, these texts and those composed in various national Englishes make significant use of foreign language terms and citations. Many theoretical terms (whether neologistic or semantically re-accented) - 'langue', 'parole', 'différance', 'jouissance', 'ostranie' - are deployed in the original in English-language texts. The post-structuralist

reinvention of classical rhetoric and philosophy has incorporated a variety of Greek and Latin words into the lexicon of contemporary literary theory - 'catachresis', 'chora', 'logos' for example - some of which have had a historical life in various national Englishes, but whose foreignness may be refigured and strongly asserted, in accompanying etymological narratives for example. This second example draws attention to the extent to which the presence of foreign words may be marked or unmarked in particular contexts and for specific reading constituencies. To a non-French native speaker familiar with structuralism, 'langue' and 'parole' are not foreign words, they are the usual terms for a pair of relationally defined concepts.[5] The use of such terms proposes both precision and conciseness as values but, more pertinently here, also marks the presence of a particular language, not French, but the language of structural linguistics. It is on intra-linguistic translation such as this that I will focus. Any practice of translation must assume at least two languages: the language to be translated and the language of translation. Most simply, the translating utterance is presumed to iterate the original but in a different language; it is an interpretation of the original which is intended to render it in a familiar, intelligible form. Understanding 'language' in Bakhtin's sense can extend the scope and interest of translation as a conceptual category and re-inscribe it as a central modality of intertextual practice. What I will be focusing on here is translative practices where 'original' and translation are co-present in the edition. The 'original' may or may not be a direct citation; what is common to the set of practices explored below is that they all re-iterate in another mode. The translating language may be another 'national' language, another register or genre, but it can also take the form of an illustrative example or analogy which iterates and interprets an original represented in another mode. I am using 'translation' here in an expanded and to some extent figurative sense, as a practice which includes, for example, the analysis of the contents page as a translation of the title, as well as more canonical instances.

The textbook is not exclusively governed by accessibility and the practices of translation that it engenders. Coverage or covering the ground of the field in question is likewise a criterion, goal and value which shapes the representations of texts, concepts and theories. And it is coverage which accounts for the extent of topicalising representation in textbooks. Like translation, topicalization encompasses a wide variety of practices, which are not unique to textbooks but take particular and distinctive forms in such contexts, specifically because of the co-presence of a set of accessibility-governed translative practices. Classical rhetoric distinguishes two types of topos which are modalities of 'inventio'. An analytic topic presumes a set of always-already existing practices of argument (the argument from tradition, the argument by analogy etc.) which can be used to formulate particular arguments about particular subjects.[6] It also suggests how new ones can be generated: existing reasoning

conventions intersect or permute with new and particular subject matter, which by implication can be topicalized in various ways. The cumulative topos or commonplace, which will form the focus of this analysis, is an established intersection of a mode of argument and a particular subject matter: an institutionalised mode of discursive representation: 'the fickleness of woman', life as 'a game of chance' or 'a road with many crossroads', 'the tears of a clown'. In each case, the topos can be versioned in a multiplicity of languages and indeed media, but the organising discourse remains, broadly speaking, the same.[7] 'The tears of a clown' is a much iterated topos which assumes and articulates the disjunction between the public and the private, between the performed and the authentic: relations which are charged by the apparently absolute opposition between laughter and tears. This topos can be realised and elaborated in a multiplicity of ways: the familiar filmic image of the circus clown taking off his make-up after the show is one instance. Here, the liminality of the dressing room - the place where public and private identities are made and un-made and the symbolic role of the mirror - as a silent witness configuring both the other of audience and the image of self reflected and reflected upon - underscore the dichotomy and ambiguity of public performance and private identity.

Translation directs attention to the shifts between original and translating languages (registers, genres, narrative codes and so on), topicalization to discourse as an interpretative modality. In each case, however, my aim is to underscore the relations between languages and discourse as central to elaborating the interpretative process. Whilst accessibility configures practices which are characteristically committed to the representation of the new and difficult in familiar and facilitating forms, coverage is predicated on the shared, pre-given character of the field which is being represented, and topicalization is one of its fundamental intertextual forms. In the analysis, I aim to show that the values and practices engendered by accessibility and coverage pull in opposite directions, often proposing interpretations and readings which conflict and are incompatible. Accessibility is a reader-centred concept and is obviously both relative and variable. But accessibility is more than a set of assumptions made about the reader: it has a more specific and institutional character. Whether the subject matter is gardening or Freud, accessibility always presumes that subject matter as an established and valued field of knowledge and practice. Accessibility is a frequently stated aim of Readers and Introductions and a common cause for comment in reviews where a textbook may be deemed to have succeeded or failed to achieve it. The blurb of Raman Selden's *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* , for example, represents it as 'the first easily accessible account of contemporary theory'.[8] Accessibility may also be represented as problematic. The possible dangers of accessibility - usually perceived as banalisation or bowdlerisation - may also be

acknowledged. In the preface to *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Terry Eagleton remarks:

> Though such a project obviously involves omissions and oversimplifications, I have tried to popularise rather than vulgarise the subject.[9]

Accessibility has a number of meanings in relations to textbooks. It most obviously indicates the 'stylistic' representation of the subject matter, but it may also refer to the facilitating ways in which the book configures its own use - bibliographies which classify 'further reading' in terms of relative difficulty, for example.[10] 'Accessibility' can also refer, especially in Readers, to the convenient accommodation of a group of texts in a single place of publication.[11] Accessibility does not presume the intrinsic difficulty of the subject matter, though in the case of literary theory textbooks, this is a frequent assumption. In the introduction to *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory* (1996), the editors paraphrase K. M. Newton's introduction to *Theory into Practice* (1992) as a rationale for their own 'theory into practice' Reader: 'the ... book is a response ... to students who find that the high level of abstraction of much theory makes it difficult to grasp and deploy'.[12]

In Readers and Introductions, accessibility always intersects with a set of practices shaped by coverage. A number of publishing categories valorise coverage. The tourist guidebook, the listings magazine or supplement, and in a different vein, the encyclopaedia and dictionary are all instances where an always-already modified inclusiveness is a central goal. Like accessibility, coverage presumes a field which pre-exists any mapping or delineation. And whilst any mode of representation of a field is always a making and remaking, the presumption of the pre-given object, in academic textbooks in particular, is of prime importance to the processes and practices of both production and reception. Like accessibility, coverage is an avowed aim and, on occasion, a site of anxiety in the prefaces of Introductions and Readers, surfacing most commonly in comparisons and contrasts with other textbooks or earlier editions of the 'same' book. In the preface to the second edition of *Modern Literary Theory*, the editors refer to the date of publication of the first edition (1988) and comment:

> Since then *all* foundations of Western thought and representation have increasingly been held up to critical gaze and for that reason we have a revised and expanded section on Postmodernism to reflect this most recent development.[13]

Coverage most obviously pertains to questions of selection - is Formalism to be included or not? - and to inclusiveness. Readers and Introductions do not necessarily seek to map the field exhaustively, but it is an important value and modality of practice and one which is complicated by the recognition that the field is subject to change:[14]

> The task of selection for this anthology has not been an easy one, for the field which has to be mapped continuously changes its boundaries as new relations and combinations move in and out of the foreground.[15]

Change is suggested here as an inherent aspect of the field which the book must map. The practices which accessibility and coverage configure and the interpretative and reading practices which they propose are visible in all parts of the apparatus of textbooks. I will begin by examining titles and intertitles.

2. Accessibility and coverage: translation and topicalisation

Titling practices

Titles, as discussed in chapters four and five, are important intertextual contexts for reading, generating expectations - thematic and rhematic, to use Genette's terms - of the text's content and form.[16] Most simply, titles propose a preliminary or provisional context which may be confirmed or challenged by the processes of reading. Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary*, for example, acquaints the reader with two 'other' Madame Bovarys - Charles's mother and his first wife - before the third - Emma - is introduced. But the novel's progress and particularly its ending secures Emma as the true referent of the title. This is not simply because she is the central character: she is also the subject of a scandal which the novel retells, a literary recoding that 'still' bears the markers of its languages - gossip and intrigue, official and unofficial versions of events and so on. Emma Bovary will be remembered: she is Madame Bovary and part of the history of the provincial town which scrutinised her so closely.[17]

Readers and Introductions are rich in titles and intertitles (Genette's term) which have a distinctive set of framing functions.[18] Apart from the title of the book itself there are a range of intertitles: chapter and section headings, subheadings within chapters, sections, and often within bibliographies. The book titles of Readers and Introductions are highly general: *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*; *Literary Theory: An Introduction*; *Studying Literary Theory: An Introduction*; *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* ; *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Theory* and *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader.*[19] None of these offers a gloss or translation of what literary theory might be despite the presumption, in many cases explicit in the title, of the prescribed reader's unfamiliarity with the object, but they do all strongly propose that literary theory does not merely exist but is an established object. What gives this interpretation its force is the way in which the titles conjoin a representation of their content with one of their form. It is the very representation of these texts as Introductions or Guides or Readers which

proposes the established character of the object: this is a particular treatment of literary theory (whatever that might be). It the very inscription of accessibility that effects this formal topicalisation. The marking of a particular context - 'studying literary theory' - in one case, and of a particular moment in the reader's relation to theory - beginning theory - in an other, assert, even more strongly, the stable existence of the object that the reader is presumed to be unfamiliar with: to be studied, to be 'begun', the object must have an already institutionalised existence. The particularised present of the prescribed reader who is here and now beginning or studying literary theory enriches the established and above all prior temporality of theory. The titles which modify literary theory, with 'contemporary' or 'modern' for example, also foreground institutionality: contemporary or modern (as modifiers) presuppose the pre-existence of a second object: literary theory, which precedes contemporary literary theory.

The established character of the object, although a given, is not represented as shared between addresser and addressee. The title of the introductory textbook proposes a field that is established and shared amongst some but new or unfamiliar to the prescribed reader: a significant distance exists between writing subject and reading subject. The former is not simply knowledgeable about a certain set of objects which are new to the reader, but shares this knowledge with others in a common zone of discourse. This discourse is not the exclusive property of the writing subject, or rather the writing subject is only one of a number of authors or signatories. But the reader is (for the moment at least) presumed to be outside this discourse and the title proposes a way of opening it up.

Whilst Introductions explicitly inscribe their status and propose their accessibility, Readers operate slightly differently, and the introductory status of the book may or may not be strongly marked. The title *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader* does not inscribe a reader who has little or no knowledge of the field which the book covers. Rather, it is the collection and accommodation of a number of texts in one volume that render it 'accessible', and indeed the sheer size and weight of Readers proposes both inclusiveness (coverage) and accessibility. *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory* configures accessibility somewhat differently. The strongly proposed sense of 'practical' is constituted antonymically by 'theory': practical as opposed to theoretical. This enriches the sense of 'practical' to include facilitating, suggesting that the object is being modalised in introductory terms. This is turn makes possible other implicatures: 'contemporary literary theory is difficult' and various versions of a criticism of the theoretical qua theoretical.

On the contents page of Readers and Introductions, the book title is supplemented by a range of intertitles which together constitute a representation of the book, and in particular its structure. The contents page is 'metastructural'; representing something of the book's architecture: its order, and perhaps, something of its emphasis - as

measured by duration - as well as its content. It may also suggest reading strategies: as will be shown, Readers and Introductions do not privilege a linear reading practice. But in the case of Readers and Introductions, the contents page can also be understood as a translation of the title.

The contents pages of *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* inform us that the book consists of six chapters, preceded by an introduction and followed by an index.[20] The chapters are titled and ordered as follows: 'Russian Formalism', 'Marxist theories', 'Structuralist theories', 'Post-structuralist theories', 'Reader-oriented theories' and 'Feminist theories'.[21] Chapter length varies: the shortest (on formalism) is thirteen pages, the longest (on post-structuralism) is thirty three. Each chapter is subdivided into sections which are also titled. The number of titled sections also varies (from four - structuralism - to nine - reader-oriented). The section titles of the contents pages correspond to the chapter organisation and intertitles (except that each chapter also includes a bibliography which is not mentioned in the contents pages). The contents page proposes an immediate semantic enrichment of the 'contemporary literary theory' of the title. Comprising nearly two pages, the contents gloss or translate literary theory as a general term for a multiplicity of theoretical practices; what is more, each of these theories is itself multiple - Feminist theories and so on. But it is the prior classification proposed by the book title which enables this variety to be configured in the same context. Multiplicity is not only asserted by the plural form that attends all but the first chapter title, but by the thirty six chapter subheadings, which list a variety of usually conjoined names and concepts: for example, 'Roland Barthes: the plural text', 'Discourse and power: Michel Foucault and Edward Said'. Coverage and accessibility clearly intersect in the textual practice of representation here. This is most clearly manifest in the prevalence and multiplicity of author names, which suggest the broad scope of the field, a range extended by the presence of many names whose morphology would be marked as foreign to a native English speaker (whether or not the national language could be identified): Shklovsky, Althusser, Lévi-Strauss, Husserl, for example. A certain cultural richness is proposed. But this plurality of names is also perhaps paradoxically shaped by accessibility. Whilst the majority of the names are assumed to be unknown to the prescribed reader, the proper names represent a certain will to 'humanise'; a textual practice translates the abstract into a formally more accessible concrete. Accessibility also shapes the contents page in other ways. Chapter titles and sub-headings are all page-numbered: any section can be looked up, suggesting that the book's format is reader-friendly. The criterion of accessibility is substantively marked in the number of subheadings and their correspondence with particular page numbers. A glance at the page numbers informs the reader that no named section of a chapter is longer than seven pages, most are two or three. The text is divided and arranged in small segments, which is presumed to render and distribute

the matter of the text in a facilitating form. But this conciseness also implicates, though less strongly, the scope of the field of coverage. Succinct representation is informed by the size of the field covered or mapped, although this is subordinate to accessibility.

The starkness of the contents page of Eagleton's *Literary Theory* provides a useful contrast. Here the contents, spaciously formatted, cover only half a page. The five named chapters are listed as are the (also named) introduction and conclusion.[22] But there are no subheadings (either on the contents page or within the book itself, where section breaks are marked exclusively by spacing). Compare this to the contents page of *Beginning Theory* which runs to nearly four packed pages.[23] Chapter subheadings abound (the average number per chapter is eight), and, as in *A Reader's Guide*, all correspond to the chapter intertitles. What is most noticeable about the linguistic form of these intertitles is the degree of both lexical repetition and lexical and syntactic parallelism. Every chapter has two fixed sections: 'Stop and Think' and 'Selected Reading', both of which explicitly address the prescribed reader. All chapters apart from the first have sections entitled 'What x critics do' (where x might be structuralist, Feminist, new historicist etc.) and 'x theory/ x criticism: an example / examples'. The criterion informing this practice is accessibility: the formal repetition and parallelism promising uniformity of treatment. Substantively, and in terms congruent with *A Reader's Guide*, the marking of 'doing' and of examples translate the abstract object of the title - 'Theory' - into practice and illustration.

The contents page is, as noted above, one manifestation of the organisation or architecture of the textbook. Within such structures, particular texts, authors, concepts and discourses are embedded in multiple intertextual patterns of classification which propose a range of reading relations, most obviously within chapters, sections and subsections, where they may be classified according to 'theory' (Structuralism, Feminism, Marxism, and so on); and/or to 'topic' ('The Subject', 'Language and Textuality', 'Discourse and the Social').[24] Texts may also be located within a range of macro- and micro-genealogies, and configured in comparative and contrastive patterns (Like Derrida, Barthes is interested in...; Unlike Greimas, Genette focuses on...). These proposed relations intersect with the always-already intertextual character of the texts and discourses themselves (an intersection more strongly marked in Readers where the mode of representation is extended citation).

The patterns of textual relations within Readers and Introductions are substantially shaped by assumptions about the state of the field at a particular moment, its perimeters and dominants: those objects, practices and sites of debate or contestation which are perceived as the most central, most important and most characteristic of the field in its contemporary form. These patternings are represented not as the individual work or mapping of the author(s) or editor(s) of the textbook, but as a set of relations which are, in the main, the common property of the field and are 'underwritten' by it. The author

or editor is not assumed to be the formative agent of either the field (in its most general sense) or its particular textual patternings and relations; rather the author is a representative of the field in which these relations originated and were legitimated. This augments the authority of the textual relations proposed: not the idiosyncratic whim of an individual but the consensus of a field. However, this ordering is also governed by the principle of accessibility: the grouping of texts under headings should facilitate reading. The classifications effected by headings ('Feminism', 'The Body' etc.) filter the myriad of intertextual reading contexts that any text can propose, creating a focus or perspective through which the texts, so grouped, can be read and related to one another. Classificatory practices order and delimit textual relations and the reading practices proposed by them.

Sectioning Practices

Central to the ways in which textual relations are configured in Readers and Introductions is the concept of representativeness: the text or body of work that is representative of a particular object, author, theory or historical moment within a particular theory. 'The Death of the Author', for example, is ubiquitously classified as a quintessential representation of the emergence of post-structuralism, and Barthes's writing in general is often represented as an instantiation of the shift from structuralism to post-structuralism.[25] In the most general sense, such classifications propose a reading practice where each modality of reading extends beyond the text itself: to read 'The Death of the Author' is also to read in a more general sense about post-structuralism and other post-structuralist texts. The meanings of the text are not exclusive to it but pertain to and are present in the discourses of post-structuralism in some wider sense. The text is a kind of map or guide and may also function as a frame through which other post-structuralist texts are read. The proposal of relations between particular texts and the wider world of discourse in which they participate is a typical feature of these textbooks. The value of such texts lies precisely in the extensions proposed by its classification as 'representative'. Within Introductions and Readers, texts are also given as more or less representative within the general category. There is a difference between a text which is classified as 'an example of' or even 'a good example of' and one categorised as emblematic or epitomatic.[26] The exemplary or epitomatic text is proposed as having more value than the mere example or representative, in the sense outlined above. In the first case, the text could be substituted for a range of other typical texts within the field. In the second, the group of texts which could substitute for it is necessarily significantly smaller: not merely typical but epitomatic. In both cases however, what is strongly proposed is that the field is larger, more extensive than any particular instance of coverage or mapping. As

in realism, metonymy suggests more, more than is actually represented in the particular instance. But every category has its opposite. And whilst the majority of texts discussed or extracted in Readers and Introductions are representative, some are not: they are unique and unsubstitutable. 'Unsubstitutability' is not a fixed quality of the text which is presented as such. It is an attribute and value which is proposed within particular intertextual classifications and locations. Thus, for example, in *Modern Literary Theory*, the extract from Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* is unsubstitutable because of the genealogy asserted in the Reader as a whole, where Saussure is posited as the originary and founding moment of literary theory:

> Saussure's theory offers the possibility of a different perspective and gives rise to a wholly different epistemology. This perspective has been referred to as 'post-Saussurean'; it generally includes structuralist and/or post-structuralist theories.[27]

The explicit and implicit values of this perspective shape the genealogy proposed. Within it, there is no alternative to Saussure: no equivalent or near equivalent text which could substitute. Whilst coverage is generally predicated on the notion of the representative text, the unique and necessary text does not undermine the established metonymic 'more' that the representative asserts. The uncommon (in practice) and unsubstitutable text is a valorised constituent of the field as it is proposed.

The concept of representativeness is also central to the relations that are proposed between individual texts and discourses within Readers and Introductions. First, as noted above, representativeness implicates a field which the text or discourse is representative of. Second, the representative is the category which mediates the ordering, including the reading order of the texts and discourses that the textbook configures. The uniformity of treatment that is accorded to each theory in *Beginning Theory* proposes first that each theory has a formally identical relation with theory, and second that these various practices are comparable, indeed even substitutable (all can be practised and exemplified, all 'generate' their own particular kind of critic and so on). This in turn proposes that the book does not require or privilege a linear reading, but that the chapters may be read in any order. And indeed within the body text the segues and references back to previous chapters are minimal, furthering the sense of the individual chapter's discreteness.[28]

In strong contrast and more typically, *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader* proposes a definite narrative and particular orders of reading. The book is divided into two parts which are in turn divided into sections. The texts in Part One are, with one exception - 'Saussure' - arranged under headings of named theories: 'Formalism', 'Structuralism', 'Marxism', 'Reader Response' and 'Feminism'. The texts in Part Two are classified in two ways; first, under subject headings - 'The Subject', 'Language and Textuality',

'Discourse and the Social'; and second, under named 'theories': 'New Historicism' and 'Postmodernism'.[29] This Reader makes a relatively clear and strong distinction between Parts One and Two:

> Part One of this book deals with the initial break with the orthodoxies of literary studies. The material for this part has been selected to exemplify its less radical questioning and undermining of the literary studies enterprise. But while it is less radical it does prepare the ground for the work represented in Part Two which generally adopts a more interrogative and disruptive perspective.[30]

It is clearly assumed here that the prescribed reader will interpret 'radical' as a term of approbation, and that 'undermining' and 'disrupting' are goods in this context.[31] I will return to the issue of assumptions when I discuss topicalisation later on in the chapter, but it is the narrative and evaluative relations proposed between Parts One and Two that are of interest here. The value of Russian Formalism, Structuralism, Marxism, Reader Theory and Feminism is primarily as a discursive prequel and intertext for what follows. The texts in Part One are proposed as explicatory of those in Part Two ('prepare the ground'). This in turn implicates that the latter have an autonomous and not a dependent or relative value (Part Two is not a preparation for anything, it is the 'main event'); as such they call perhaps for a more careful reading. What is also proposed is a reading practice which will draw out the contrasting 'radicals' of each part, and, given the positive accent of 'radical', evaluation here precedes both interpretation and explication. The value of Part Two is also proposed by its duration: 251 pages, against the 107 pages of Part One. The broad expanse of ground that post-structuralism is presumed to cover suggests that it exceeds a single classification, and whether or not the reader is familiar with the use of 'social' as a noun ('Discourse and the Social' [my emphasis]), for example, its scope may be implicated from more familiar related lexemes (society, social life and so on).

An evaluative ordering of textual and reading relations also occurs in the section introductions, but here it is the pre-texts which are accorded the greater value. In the introduction to 'Discourse and the Social', Bakhtin and Foucault are both proposed as the authors of the 'formative writings in this trajectory'.[32] The section comprises six texts: Bakhtin, from 'Discourse in the Novel'; Tony Bennett, 'Texts, Readers, Reading Formations'; Foucault, from 'The Order of Discourse'; Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Men: the Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse'; Ian Hunter, from 'Reading Character'; and, Edward Said, from 'Opponents, Audiences, Constituencies, Community'. All but Said's are bound to either Bakhtin or Foucault.[33] Bennett's is the text most explicitly located in relation to Bakhtin. The editors bind the two through a contrastive: whilst Bakhtin's work on the 'interanimation' of languages is oriented towards literary production, Bennett's focuses on reception. The repetition

of 'interanimation', a word introduced in the context of Bakhtin and also applied to Bennett's conceptualisation of language, strengthens the relation.[34] Bhabha's 'Of Mimicry and Men' 'deploys a Foucauldian method' and the 'mode of investigation' of Hunter's 'Reading Character' is 'suggested by Foucault's later work'.[35] However the relations proposed in each case differ. Bakhtin is marked as a precursor and context for Bennett. But in Foucault's case, his originating authority is explicitly marked. Bennett is not described as 'Bakhtinian'; it is Foucault who is the more established author function. This is partly because 'Foucauldian' so strongly asserts Foucault's impact and also because the narrative strongly marks the shifts of focus between early and later work which is part of the stated rationale for the choice of text - 'The Order of Discourse' - 'balanced between this shift in emphasis'.[36] In contrast, the Bakhtin extract is not named in the introduction and no rationale for its inclusion offered: the extract is 'representative Bakhtin'. Whilst we may not then be strongly encouraged to read Bennett through the lens of Bakhtin, we are certainly encouraged to read Bhabha and Hunter as illustrations of Foucauldian practice. This delimits a particular set of interpretative possibilities and constrains others.

Bhabha's text is indeed a study of a discourse and its effects, spoken from a particular place at a particular time; and more specifically certain Foucauldian categories and preoccupations are inscribed within it:

> Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference of recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both normalised knowledges and disciplinary powers.[37]

However, other intertextual relations are at least as strongly if not more strongly marked: Derrida's concept of différance, Freud and psychoanalysis more generally, and theories of colonialism. The conjunction of the first two is observable in the synoptic summary of colonial mimicry in the second paragraph of the text as 'the desire for a reformed recognisable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same but not quite.'[38] A citation from Freud on fantasy, and local contextual markers inscribe a number of lexemes with a specific, though not exclusive, psychoanalytic sense: 'ambivalence', the 'splitting' (of the subject within discourse), 'castration', 'desire'.[39] Colonial theories are likewise an important set of intertexts. The work of Said, Césaire and Fanon is referred to and footnoted, a textual context which is strengthened by the corpus of object texts to which Bhabha refers: eighteenth and nineteenth century accounts of India and Indians; and the writings of Kipling, Forster and Naipaul (cited) where the figure of the mimic man occurs.[40] The introduction to 'Discourse and the Social' does mention that Bhabha's text:

> also resonates with other post-structuralist theory. His analysis of a particular colonial subject, interesting in its own right, is also invaluable as an illustration of post-structuralism in action.[41]

However, given that this 'other' post-structuralist theory is not named and one of the text's representative virtues is an instance of a generalised post-structuralism 'in action', these other interpretative contexts are less likely to be mobilised than the named Foucauldian one which directly precedes it in this section of the Reader.[42] The Reader prioritises a particular set of intertextual relations and weakens other interpretative possibilities.

3. The relations between translation and topicalisation

So far I have focused on the ways in which accessibility and coverage and the practices of translation and topicalisation operate together in Readers and Introductions and how their relations define the content of each and their instantiation. To render the field accessible, what is shared and familiar to the field must simultaneously be represented as both new and familiar to the prescribed reader. This is the challenge. What I wish to examine now is the tensions which are generated by it, tensions which in turn generate conflicting interpretative and reading possibilities. I will begin by exploring a further set of translative practices, where original and translation are co-present in the local textual context.[43]

Some of the practices of translation which such Readers and Introductions employ are clearly common to textbooks in general, and to other modes of discourse - instruction manuals for example - where intra-linguistic translation is an established practice of representation. In all such cases, rendering accessible is a central goal and criterion of a translative practice which is reader-oriented: the original language is assumed to present interpretative difficulties to the prescribed reader and the aim is to find a translating language which the reader is familiar with. But the discursive object, 'literary theory', poses particular problems for realising this purpose of language learning and indeed for intra-linguistic translation in general.

The concept of intra-linguistic translation is strongly associated with Roman Jakobson, as one of three types distinguished in 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation'.[44] Jakobson defines intra-linguistic translation as 'rewording', a linguistic interpretation within a single language.[45] In pragmatics the concept of 'reformulation' captures some of the properties of Jakobson's definition (though it also includes such modes as summary) and it has been argued that reformulation often functions to delimit interpretative possibilities.[46] The constraining of interpretation is precisely the focus in the discussion which follows but here translation is conceived ~~in~~ intertextually and not

in the terms of either Jakobson or canonical pragmatics. Bakhtin's concept of the heteroglossia troubles the sameness inscribed in Jakobson's definition. Understood as a process which takes place within the heteroglossia, intra-linguistic translation is the set of practices whereby one 'language' - in Bakhtin's sense - is rendered into another, a process which seeks to retain the referent and represent it within another signifying practice. Likewise, intertextual theories expose the ordinary-language assumptions which are particularly pertinent to pragmatic 'reformulation'. Diane Blakemore, for example, characterises specialised languages (one of her examples is botanical language) as both 'difficult' and 'costly' in processing terms, suggesting an ordinary language, everyday language which is by contrast 'processing-light'.[47] But intertextual theories disturb the simplicity of such a distinction: there is no singular everyday language. Bakhtin and Kristeva's attention to the discourses which underwrite linguistic practices also draw attention to the assumptions which govern translation in textbooks, which in turn shape and constrain interpretative possibilities.[48]

In the case of literary theory books (and in many other modes of intra-linguistic translation) languages are predominantly classified as either specialist (or 'technical') or generalist (or 'common'), and translation is conceived as the practice and passage from special to general. The difficulty that the original technical language poses to an 'ordinary reader' may be justified, for example on the grounds of precision or concision; or it may be challenged - as unnecessary 'jargon' or deliberate obfuscation - as part of an argument which valorises 'plain speaking'. But this 'calling a spade a spade' discourse is bound to the fallacy that there is a common language, real or ideal, that can be, or should be, understood by all. In 'Words from Abroad', Theodor Adorno argues that the use of 'foreign words' is a critically productive counter to the chimera of a common language.[49] For him, the presence of foreign words (he is talking specifically about national languages) is a marker of the non-presence and non-existence of a common, organic language, which exposes desire as illusion. Further: 'Foreign words teach us that language can no longer cure us of specialisation by imitating nature; it can do so only by assuming the burden of specialisation'.[50] For Adorno, the inruptions of other languages are valorised. Likewise, for the contemporary translation theorist, Lawrence Venuti, the 'foreignising' translation is valued on the grounds that it marks, not only the original but, through careful and explicit attention to the language <u>of</u> translation, what is foreign and uncanny about it also.[51] He opposes this potentially radical practice to forms of 'domesticating' translation, which attempts to absorb and appropriate the original into the national culture of the translating language, erasing the otherness of both. Adorno and Venuti both valorise the 'unhomely', though in different ways and for different reasons, and although both treat translation (or non-translation) as a set of practices which are contextualised to some extent in terms of reading, in each case there is a formalist

correlation between the marking of the other and a radical value of disturbance and denaturalisation.[52] However what both Adorno and Venuti do draw attention to is that translation is never a narrowly 'linguistic' practice but always-already cultural - just as the difficulties proposed about literary theory are in textbooks - and, that practices of translation are strongly governed by particular discourses about language as well as by assumptions about the prescribed reader.

In literary theory textbooks, the translation of the difficult into modes presumed to be more familiar and intelligible to the prescribed reader is shaped by a range of assumptions and discourses. First and most obviously, the prescribed reader is assumed to be in 'knowledge deficit' as regards the substantive matter of these texts - literary theory. But it is also important to remember the knowledges the reader is presumed to have. The 'reader' addressed and constituted in the title of Raman Selden's introduction - *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* - is, a reader already educated in and familiar with 'Literature', (predominantly English, but also sometimes a more broadly European and on occasion North American literature) attested by the ways in which canonical literary knowledge of authors and texts is invoked as shared knowledge.[53] Second, as discussed above, such textbooks are strongly ordered by the presumption of a common language or set of languages into which the specialised, rarefied original can be translated. For example Saussure's 'sign' - a lexical item within the language of structural linguistics - is often translated in textbooks as 'word', which is presumed to be an everyday or colloquial re-rendering of the 'same' concept. Third, translation is shaped by particular understandings of the difficulties that literary theory poses, the difficulty of 'abstraction' (which can be countered by translative examples: the Saussurean sign system as traffic lights); the difficulty of theory <u>as</u> theory which can be translated into 'practice' (illustrative analyses of particular theories 'in action'), or the difficulty of theory as far distant from the prescribed reader's everyday, a distance which can be overcome by a re-rendering within the terms of what are assumed to be familiar objects and practices. I am classifying all these as practices of translation because they all seek to render or domesticate a difficult original into the form of a more accessible translation. Below I will analyse, in some detail, some examples of such translative practices, focusing in each case on the relations between original and translation as semantically constitutive. The examples discussed all represent some aspect of Saussure's linguistic theory, a choice which, I hope, both facilitates comparison and contrast but also suggests at least something of the range of possible representations that translation can effect.

Eagleton's *Literary Theory: An Introduction* furnishes the first example. An account of langue and parole and Saussure's proposed object of linguistic study is the final element in the representation of Saussure

> Finally, Saussure believed that linguistics would get into a hopeless mess if it concerned itself with actual speech, or *parole* as he called it. He was not interested in investigating what people actually said; he was concerned with the objective structure of signs which made their speech possible in the first place, and this he called *langue*. Neither was Saussure interested in the real objects which people spoke about: in order to study language effectively, the referents of the signs, the things they actually denoted, had to be placed in brackets.[54]

One of my reasons for choosing this example is that it illustrates an important point about translation strategies in textbooks. Not every 'gloss' or definition is a translation. Here the definition of 'langue' is non-translative; the phrase 'the objective structure of signs which made their speech possible in the first place' defines langue within the language of structural linguistics i.e. within the language that langue is part of.[55] By contrast, the definition of 'parole' as 'actual speech' and 'what people actually said' is a translation which re-writes the original in another language. It is the register of translation which marks the presumed to be familiar contours of an easily recognisable object. 'Actual speech' would not be significantly dissonant within a text about linguistics. But neither would it be out of place in a multiplicity of contexts which have nothing to do with linguistics. For the prescribed reader (presumed not to be familiar with linguistics) it is more probable that a non-specialised sense, a non-linguistic sense is invoked. This 'everyday' sense is strengthened by the register of 'get into a hopeless mess': the fate of linguistics if it should meddle with actual speech. This incursion of colloquial speech into formal writing is another marker of the everyday that is parole. This 'ordinary' or familiar sense is proposed more strongly because of the register contrast in the definition of 'langue' - 'the objective structure of signs which made their speech possible in the first place'. The length and formal complexity of this defining translation - a noun clause which incorporates an embedded restrictive relative clause - is, as noted above, a markedly different type of definition or gloss from 'actual speech'. Descriptively speaking, this shifting between translational and non-translational definitions is a common feature in literary theory textbooks, but what is the probable interpretative effect for the prescribed reader? The iteration of 'actual' and 'real' in the translations and representations of both parole and the referent - 'actual speech', 'what people actually said', 'the real objects which people spoke about', 'the actual things they denoted' (my emphasis) - proposes a strong contrast with the 'abstract' nature of langue. Parole or actual speech is proposed as both concrete and familiar to the prescribed reader; but equally importantly, the obviousness of parole as an object renders the definition of 'langue' obscure: a rarefied abstraction. The generalist mode of translation of parole and the register dissonance between it and the definition of langue mobilises a familiar empiricist discourse, which delimits the senses and values of actual/real and simultaneously invokes its other: the abstract. 'Abstract' is not lexicalised but the discourse invokes it as the other of real/actual and as such it

collocates with (and modifies) langue, given the strongly foregrounded opposition between the two terms. The relations between actual and abstract are also evaluative: whilst the actual is palpable and clear, the abstract is obscure, even obfuscating. This discourse strongly proposes a certain set of implicatures: 'real speech (and not the abstract system on which it is based) should be the starting point of linguistic enquiry', 'the objects which are spoken about should not be put in brackets'; and perhaps more weakly in this explicit form: 'Saussure was wrong'.

What is interesting here is that this discourse directly contradicts the arguments of the book as a whole and the critique of structuralism that follows. For Eagleton, 'what people actually said' and 'the real objects which people spoke about' are indeed central to any properly explanatory account of linguistic practice, rendering language historically specific and subject to the modes of analysis that follow from this. This definition of 'actual speech' however is hardly commonsensical, nor could it be presumed to be a familiar interpretative sense for the prescribed reader. The conceptualisation of language which Eagleton is seeking to counter is not abstraction qua abstraction but an abstraction which denies a specifically Marxist conception of historical process. This argument is explicitly substantiated in the account of Voloshinov/Bakhtin's critique of Saussurean linguistics later on in the same chapter, which is clearly valued as definitive.[56] However, the empiricist, anti-theoretical discourse articulated by these dissonant definitions (one translative, the other not) is much more likely to organise the interpretation of the prescribed reader. In drawing on a 'familiar' language, Eagleton unwittingly mobilises a discourse which, because it is familiar, is far more likely to order interpretation: it carries all the 'obvious' force of common-sense precisely because it is a dominant discourse. This example illustrates a more general argument. Within such textbooks, the translation from what is presumed to be difficult and unfamiliar into what is assumed to be a more intelligible everyday 'idiom' is also often accompanied by a translation of the concept or object into another discourse. Indeed, translation of this type often effects a simultaneous shift into another discourse, formulating the object of translation within a different field of knowledge relations, reformulating it, in fact, as another object. This is an issue to which I will return.

The second example occurs in *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader* published in a series entitled 'Critical Readers in Theory and Practice', whose stated aim is to bridge 'the gap between theory and practice [which] can often seem far too wide for the student of literary theory'.[57] *Bakhtinian Thought* is constituted out of two genres of textbook, the Introduction and the Reader, and combines an introductory student-oriented account of some of Voloshinov/Bakhtin's central ideas written by Simon Dentith with a selection of extracts from various texts by Bakhtin and Voloshinov. In the first chapter, entitled 'Voloshinov and Bakhtin on Language', a

brief account of Saussure's distinction between langue and parole is offered by way of an introduction to Voloshinov's critique of 'abstract objectivism'.[58] The distinction proposed between langue and parole is sandwiched between two versionings of an answer to Saussure's question: what is the object of linguistic science?

> He concludes that the vast number of actual uses of language cannot possibly form the object of a science; rather linguistic science must concentrate on the underlying system which enables each and every use of language to be meaningful ...
>
> ... If linguistics is to be like a science, like say geology, it has to study the types of rock and not each and every pebble on the beach.[59]

This example clearly illustrates the practice of analogical and metaphorical translation. The second versioning of the answer translates by analogy and metaphor the first. What would seem to motivate the analogy with geology is the assumption that geology is uncontroversially a science, an assumption presumed to be accepted by the prescribed reader. This maps with the repetition of 'science' in the first answer where it is strongly proposed that Saussure seeks to make the study of language scientific. This marks the second iteration relatively strongly as a translation. The analogy presupposes firstly and most strongly that one important property of sciences is that they are classificatory: scientific practices typologise and codify, they do not simply list or inventory. However, a more specific relationship between geological practice and Saussurean linguistics is also proposed by the metaphoric representation of linguistic practice: the classifying of rocks is paralleled to langue and 'each and every pebble' stands for parole, 'the vast number of actual uses of language'. The latter is proposed more strongly as the 'quantity' of parole is emphasised in both representations. But the translating metaphor constructs a very different representation of langue and parole and their relations from the representation that precedes it. The first or original representation proposes langue as an object with a causal relationship with parole, it is langue which makes possible any instance of parole: langue is 'the system which enables each and every use of language to be meaningful'. The metaphorical translation, by contrast proposes that the distinction between langue and parole is between utterances (pebbles) and utterance types (types of rock). No causal relationship is implicated between the two: a typology or classification of different types of rock does not generate the mass of pebbles on the beach. The translating metaphor permits the interpretration that langue is a (scientific) practice, a procedure. The original proposes that langue is an object of study. The choice of an 'uncontroversial' analogy and its metaphoric extension to emphasise the scientificity of Saussure's project has the effect of proposing two incompatible interpretations or readings of the objects in question. But which of these is more strongly proposed? It

is the register of the metaphor which suggests, not a resolution - both interpretations are indeed proposed - but rather a preferred interpretation. The shift of register in the last sentence marks a distinction between a scientific practice, marked by a scientific language, that of geology which 'has to study types of rock' and a non-scientific one, which is less valuable but in effect impossible. Pebbles and beaches collocate strongly to suggest a familiar recreational narrative; the aimless (if pleasurable) pastimes of counting and collecting. What is being most strongly proposed here then is Saussure's commitment to establishing linguistics as a science. The shift of register backgrounds the interpretation of langue and parole directly proposed by the metaphor and foregrounds a set of implicatures about the scientific commitments inscribed in Saussure's project. It is therefore langue as object of study that is more strongly proposed.

Finally, a related example of a different type of translation taken from Raman Selden's *A Reader's Guide To Contemporary Literary Theory*. First published in 1985 and subsequently revised to accommodate and more adequately represent the expanding and elastic boundaries of the field, it is currently in its fourth edition. The example however is still in place:

> The elements of language acquire meaning not as the result of some connection between words and things, but only as part of a system of relations. Consider the sign-system of traffic lights:
>
> red - amber - green
>
> signifier ('red')
> signified ('stop')
>
> The sign signifies only within the system 'red=stop / green = go / amber = prepare for red or green'. The relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary: there is no natural bond between red and stop, no matter how natural it may feel. Since joining the Common Market the British have had to accept new electrical colour codings which may seem unnatural (now brown, not red, = live, blue, not black, = neutral). Each colour in the traffic system signifies not by asserting a positive univocal meaning but by marking a difference, a distinction within a system of opposites and contrasts: traffic light 'red' is precisely 'not-green'; 'green' is 'not-red'.[60]

This sequence translates by example the structuralist concept of how a code works. The logic of choice is its apparent simplicity: both these sign systems have very few terms and all of the meanings and their relations can be identified and described precisely and concisely. But it also seems plausible that the examples were chosen because traffic lights and plugs are familiar objects to the prescribed reader, and in particular because the meanings of the signs are assumed to be uncontroversial. The embedding of the second example within a fragment of a historical narrative of European integration and Britain's role within it strengthens the notion that familiarity is

a key rationale for the choice of example; it presumes to invoke a particular, shared (British) experience and a punctual moment: 'since joining ...' The example seeks to translate a difficult, anti-commonsensical concept into a more reader-friendly form; and familiar objects are the mode of domestication. However, at the same time, and perhaps more strongly, familiar objects are made strange. Traffic lights are now 'a sign-system', red is 'a signifier', stop is 'a signified', 'each colour ... is a distinction within a system of opposites and contrasts'. These objects, invoked as the reassurance of the everyday, are translated into an unfamiliar language: the discourse of semiotics. Within the lexicon of Russian Formalism, this is ostranenie. The example therefore pulls in opposing directions: towards domestication (to stay within Venuti's idiom) and away from it.

The everyday examples of traffic lights and plugs also propose something about sign systems in general, and it is worth considering the meanings of 'system' that are proposed here. Both of the illustrative sign systems are, in different ways, embedded in official legal practices. To drive through a red light is illegal: flouting the code in this sense may lead to prosecution, it may also be dangerous, even fatal. The re-coding of plugs is a demand of law: a legally binding requirement for electrical goods manufacturers. More explicitly, the recoding of plugs is represented as an imposition. 'Have had to accept', within the invoked narrative of Britain's awkward and often hostile relationship with 'the Continent', suggests an unwilling and even an enforced acceptance of a code whose legitimacy and logic is sanctioned by another system. A sign system is therefore implicated as having a quasi-legal character ('the new coding for plugs was imposed by law', 'sign systems are imposed by something like law'). What is also implicated (though more weakly) is that a sign system may be imposed by another system (it is European law that demands this coding). This counters the self-sufficiency of Saussure's langue, which is explicitly proposed in the same passage: '[t]he elements of language acquire meaning not as the result of some connection between words and things, but only as part of a system of relations.'

These accounts of translative practice show that certain translations are more strongly marked as such than others but also that different types of translation suggest different strategies for reading the relations between original and translation. Definitional translations of the 'parole is actual speech' variety propose original and translation as substitutable: different signifiers which have the same signified (to stay within the Saussurean idiom). Analogical and metaphoric translations do not propose semantic identity for the original and its facilitating iteration. If linguistics is 'like' a science, it shares some but not all of its 'properties' with other sciences: 'like' in such a context suggests non-identity but also a resemblance which makes the simile in some sense useful or facilitating as a way of characterising linguistics. Analogy retains a distinction between the object and what it is likened to, metaphor meshes the two, but

both rely on the reader being able to identify the common ground which makes the comparison valid. If langue is types of rock and parole is all the pebbles on the beach then the common ground is a relation between type and instance (and langue as a classificatory practice). Clearly, the interpretative practice does not propose parole as a large number of pebbles, what is proposed is a resemblance which, it is assumed, will facilitate the understanding of the original. These differences, however, do not invalidate the classification of these pedagogically motivated strategies of analogy, metaphor and example as practices of translation. On the contrary, reconceptualising such 'figures' or rhetorical strategies as translative whilst, at the same time, foregrounding their intertextuality can disturb and trouble a sometimes unthinking valorisation of the domesticating translation. Translation by example and analogy in particular draw attention to the situation of reading and to readers. As I suggested above, such practices operate by proposing, not identity, but some shared properties between 'original' and 'translation'. But given the assumptions about the prescribed reader which order such texts - a prescribed reader who is above all unfamiliar with the matter that is literary theory - it is surely unlikely that such a reader will be able to distinguish, as part of the interpretative process, which are shared properties and which are not.[61]

Whilst the translative representations of Readers and Introductions, prescribe a reader who is in knowledge-deficit as far as the subject matter is concerned, these representations intersect with another set, strongly topicalised, which seem to imagine a very different reader and reading practice. My main interest here is in the form of topicalised representations, the knowledges that they assume and the relations constituted between writing subject and prescribed reader. As already suggested, my focus is on the cumulative topos or commonplace: an established intersection of a mode of argument and a particular subject matter. Fundamental to the definition of the commonplace is that it is always-already much cited. Any versioning of a commonplace presumes the addressee's familiarity with a particular case of the already-said, a familiarity which is shared, common and makes appeal to a common culture: the addressee is not only familiar and conversant with the commonplace, but, in a certain sense, a co-author of it. The always-and-already and much-versioned character of the commonplace is the 'source' of its authority: its invocation or versioning is always an assertion of its already-existence and, crucially, its suffusion, its multiple iterations within a zones or zones of discourse. Every field has its commonplaces, however specialised its domain. The 'common' of the commonplace should not be aligned with 'ordinary' 'non-specialised' language use, nor should suffusion be mapped and measured against and within the General Culture as a whole. Many commonplaces cross the boundaries of many 'languages' (in Bakhtin's expansive sense) but this is a special case of the general phenomena, not the definition of it.

It should therefore be no surprise to encounter commonplaces in such highly regulated zones of discourse as disciplines and the fields that comprise them. Within the field comprised by Literary Theory there are many contemporary commonplaces: meaning is radically and irrevocably unfixed; identity likewise; history is exclusively a process of change; Saussure is the origin of modern literary theory and so on. The identification and differentiation of Anglo-American and French feminisms for example is treated as an uncontroversial classification of a particular passage in the history of feminist theory. Mary Eagleton for example, in her introduction to *Feminist Literary Crtiicism* , writes that '[Toril] Moi's suggestion is that Anglo-American feminism does not possess the necessary theoretical apparatus to respond adequately to Woolf.' (This section is titled 'Anglo-American and French Feminisms'). Likewise, Peter Barry in *Beginning Theory* , who elaborates the topos further:

> What is usually called the 'Anglo-American' version of feminism has tended to be more sceptical about recent critical theory, and more cautious in using it than the 'French' feminists, who have adopted and adapted a great deal of (mainly) post-structuralist and psychoanalytic criticism.

Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, the editors of the Reader *Feminisms* explain their rationale in terms of the same opposition.[62] Most Readers on feminism, they argue, are too methodologically narrow and widening the perspective in one dimension often means a narrowing in another: '[g]enerally, if an anthology focuses on French feminist theories, it excludes American approaches ...'[i] What is interesting here is that the French/Anglo-American binary is treated as a neutral classification rather than an argument, and that its origins and provenance as such are no longer deemed to warrant attribution.[63] And indeed, the obvious peculiarity of the commonplace as form within academic discourse is that its frequent non-attribution conflicts with conventions which privilege the situation and marking of the origins of arguments.

Whilst it seems evident that the commonplace would be a common form of argumentation within particular fields, it is perhaps less obvious that it would be a common form of representation in the textbook - modalised for a readership assumed to be in knowledge-deficit about the focalised matter of the text. The commonplace is, however, a staple of Readers and Introductions, and perhaps the strongest marker of coverage understood in terms of the logics of the field. A commonplace presumes the addressee's familiarity with a particular case of the already-said, something that is held to be common and uncontroversial: a representation upon which we can all agree. The characteristic form of the commonplace is elliptical: most usually an abbreviated representation which it is presumed the prescribed reader can elaborate or expand. Ellipsis of this kind is central to the definition of the enthymeme, the canonical mode of topicalized argument. Whilst some contemporary commentators define the enthymeme

as either formally or materially deficient in that one of the premises is either absent or questionable, James C. Raymond in 'Enthymemes, Examples and Rhetorical Method' suggests a more properly rhetorical definition, focusing on the context of utterance and specifically the relations between speaker and addressee.[64] Enthymemes, are, suggests Raymond, not 'deficient'; rather, the 'missing' premise is presumed to be knowledge that the audience has and will supply. For example, when Vivien Jones in her introduction to *Pride and Prejudice* cites Austen's own representation of her subject matter - '3 or 4 families in a country village' - and concludes that 'she writes therefore about gender and class', her argument elides a premise. To write about gender and class if you write about the family is true if and only if the family is conceptualised as a social and specifically patriarchal institution. What is important here are the interpretative effects of such assumptions about readers' knowledge.

In the final sentence of the preface to *Modern Literary Theory*, the editors express their hopes for the reader of the book:

> We hope that the experience of reading the book will stimulate further interest and help to clarify the major theoretical positions and their relations to each other. But beyond that (and in the spirit of contemporary theory) we hope that it will encourage readers to contest and challenge the very structures of knowledge and understanding we have used in compiling this book.[65]

Two dramatically different hopes are expressed here the relatively modest expectation that the Reader will elucidate literary theory and engender further interest, and the somewhat grandiose prospect that readers will themselves contest the discursive assumptions that order the book. The second desire is made 'in the spirit of contemporary literary theory'; the value accorded to its practices is strongly, even forcefully, proposed as the ideal outcome of reading. Here as elsewhere, the value of literary theory is a strong assumption of the field which coverage presupposes.[66] But a general, indeed generic partiality for theory as such, and a marking of its positive value within a modernist argument, are more primary assumptions. Put in its simplest terms: challenging orthodoxy or tradition is good; the more deeply established or deeply grounded the orthodoxy the better; change of a radical and disruptive kind - 'revolution not evolution' - is good. The point here is not whether these are 'in reality' positive values but how they are represented here in a topicalised mode. Why radical change and transformation might be a good is not explicated, it is assumed as shared and uncontroversial knowledge between the field and the prescribed reader who is addressed here as belonging to it. This is the missing term of the enthymeme:

Literary theory challenges traditional criticism.
[Challenging tradition is a good].

Literary theory is a good.

Literary theory is a good, if challenging tradition is good. The conclusion of the argument is dependent on the bracketed middle term. But this is nowhere represented in the preface or introduction of a book that represents itself as 'a pedagogic introduction'.[67]

A more 'developed' and elliptical topicalization of literary theory is proposed in the opening paragraph of *Beginning Theory*:

> The 1980's probably saw the high-water mark of literary theory. That decade was the 'moment' of theory, when the topic was fashionable and controversial ... the moment of theory has probably passed. So why another 'primer' so late in the day?

Here it is the controversy of theory that is the commonplace: 'literary theory is controversial'. But why it was (or is) is nowhere inscribed in the sentence or the surrounding context. A controversy presupposes protagonists and a 'site' of struggle. The substance of these is not even gestured to in the introduction as a whole.[68] But the knowledges required to understand the controversy of literary theory cannot be presumed of the 'official' prescribed reader, the student who is 'beginning theory'; it is the consensus of the field ordered by coverage which shapes this topicalised representation.

These sentences in fact look back to the point at which textbooks such as *A Reader's Guide* and *Literary Theory* were written and first published, a moment which is contrasted with the present of *Beginning Theory* - the middle 1990s. In *A Reader's Guide*, literary theory is also characterised as controversial but the terms of the controversy are explicated: those who participate in it and their rationales are particularised and on occasion named. The difference between the two books is formal - one is a topicalized mode of representation, the other is not - and historical. *A Reader's Guide* (1985) and *Beginning Theory* (1995) mark very different moments in the life of literary theory. The first belongs to a stage when the pedagogic possibilities of theory were in the process of being recognised for the first time; the second to a moment when the teaching of theory is a staple of the curriculum and a requirement of the institutions which oversee the teaching of English Studies. But the intensification of topicalisation - both in terms of their number and their ever more abbreviated form - is not explicable in terms of different prescribed readerships, both of whom are presumed to be unfamiliar with the matter of literary theory. And if anything, <u>less</u> is assumed about the reader's acquaintance with literary theory in *Beginning Theory*. and Barry's summary of other Introductions suggests that these are in the main too difficult.[69]

These examples of translation and topicalisation demonstrate the ways in which accessibility and coverage order conflicting practices of representation which presume very different prescribed readers and very different reading practices. The 'official' prescribed reader, with little or no knowledge of the subject, is inscribed in the translative practices required by accessibility, but the addressee of the many topicalised representations is always-already a participant in the field and shares its knowledges and its values. This 'doubling' of the reader and the incompatible interpretative practices proposed by translation and topicalisation are often strongly manifested in passages of theoretical critique:

> Like Russian Formalism, structuralism believes in the possibility of a 'science' of literature, one based on form rather than content. For structuralism, such a science means it could potentially master and explain the world of signs through exhaustive detailing and analysing of the systems that allowed signs to speak. Though this science would itself have to be carried out in language (the dominant sign system) the language of criticism was deemed to be a 'metalanguage' - that is a language that can speak about and explain the workings of 'object' languages (languages that seem to speak directly about the world). Structuralism's claim to be operating through a metalanguage cannot, however, overcome the criticism that it is actually no more than a powerful interpretative schema for analysing texts. Moreover, while rejecting the idea of a unified meaning occupying the text, structuralism still seeks unity or unification in the literary system as a whole, recourse to which can then 'explain' the individual work. It also tends to treat the text as a function of the system of literature, divorcing it from historical and social context.[70]

'Metalanguage' is a term which is presumed to require definition, one in the same language and discourse as the concept itself ('a language that can speak about and explain the workings of "object" languages'). A part of this definition, in turn, calls for a translation (an object language is one which 'seem[s] to speak directly about the world'). Indeed, the definition of metalanguage is double-voiced or hybrid in register, in part shifting away from the specialised discourse of the term itself but at the same time reinvoking it in the choice of 'object languages'. The paragraph continues by summarising a series of criticisms of structuralism. First, it is not a language which explains other languages, rather it is, at most, a strong mode of interpretation; second, it seeks unity in the system, if not in individual texts; and third, it is a theoretical practice which tends to separate text from social and historical context. Each of these arguments is highly elliptical in form and relies on knowledge which is not recuperable in the preceding textual context (either in the section introduction to structuralism or in the general introduction and preface). All these arguments version established critiques of structuralism: they are topoi. Only the first is explicitly classified as a criticism. It is the 'moreover' and the 'also' which introduce the second and third arguments which suggest the continuity of the classification. There is no

elaboration of why the search for a unity within the text or divorcing it from context might be errors.

In the first case, the criticism that structuralism is only a powerful interpretative scheme is only valid if the prescribed reader has some knowledge of any (or all) of the various critiques of meta-language that are an important constituent of many post-structuralist critiques of structuralism: metalanguage as an attempt at 'mastery' of the 'other' language which at the same time always remains locked within it, for example. In the second case, unity is represented as futile ('still seeks'), but the illusory nature of this quest is only explicable if the prescribed reader is aware of what follows the 'still' and interprets it with this inflection. Unity as principle or goal is weakly proposed as an error but why it is an error is not recoverable from the textual context, and relies on knowledge, which draws on post-structuralist formulations of meaning as multiple and conflictual. In the third case, divorce from context is suggested as problematic but why is not recuperable unless the prescribed reader both knows and is committed to the value of context as a modality of literary critical practice. The 'why' here can be variously supplied - by Marxism, Feminism, certain strands of post-structuralism - no knowledge of a particular domain of theoretical discourse is required, but some theoretical knowledge of this type is. In all three cases the criticisms are represented as common-sense. But this is the common-sense of the field, and precisely not that of the 'official' prescribed reader, who does not know what metalanguage means. Here topicalisation enters the language of translation: 'languages that seem to speak directly about the world' (my emphasis).[71] The epistemic modal is seemingly out of place within a definition. But the doubt inscribed in this definition is the topicalized marker of the critique of metalanguage in even more elliptical form, and anticipates the sentence which follows. Translation and topicalization pull in different and opposing directions. 'Metalanguage' requires translation but an understanding of a post-structuralist critique of it is assumed.

4. Conclusions: the constitution of 'Theory' as a meta-discourse

The extent of topicalisation in Readers and Introductions itself marks the strongly institutionalised character of the field demarcated by 'Theory'. This institutionalisation is clearly not governed exclusively by 'textbooking', it was significantly shaped and made possible by the ways in which certain texts and intellectual formations have been 'taken up' and metabolised in various forms over the past thirty or so years.[72] In a different vein, 'Theory' is now a professional identity within academia. But whilst textbooking alone cannot be said to have institutionalised Theory, I would argue that as one (and perhaps the most important) of the modalities of pedagogy in higher education and academic publishing, the Literary Theory textbook has significantly contributed to

the constitution of the field that is now 'Theory', and, most specifically, to the construction of a discourse about its object. In this final section, I will outline the terms and conditions of this discourse and show how it too is shaped by the goals of accessibility and coverage, suggesting at the same time the reading possibilities that the discourse proposes, possibilities which pertain most closely to evaluation, and to the relations between texts and/or theories.

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault elaborates the rules of formation which together govern the relations between statements within a discourse.[73] A discursive fields is constituted by and constitutes particular 'objects' - which are configured and recognised as legitimate 'sites' of investigation. Concepts make it possible to order statements about objects into series or sequences which have a unity and internal logic. In feminist discourse for example, it is the concept of patriarchy which makes possible a set of comparisons and contrasts between the family and say, the workplace and/or a religious institution, all of which are conceived as patriarchal. A discourse has one or more enunciative modalities - or institutional sites from which the statements of a particular discourse can be 'spoken' and which render it legitimate. A particular organisation of concepts, grouping of objects and set of modes of enunciation together comprise a 'strategy' or theory.[74]

Is it possible to argue that 'Literary Theory' is a discourse in this sense? From a critical perspective, the answer must be no. The various theoretical practices which are configured under the heading of Theory do not in any way satisfy the conditions of definition of a discursive field. Under this banner are a multiplicity of conflicting objects, concepts, enunciative modalities and therefore strategies. Most importantly there is no singular set of truth conditions which order and are ordered by Literary Theory. Whilst divergence and conflict 'in the true' are constitutive and productive aspects of a discourse for Foucault, the truth conditions of the various theoretical and critical practices classified as Literary Theory are multiple, divergent, contradictory. These discourses do not diverge in the true but 'about' the true and its conditions of existence.[75] However, it is also clear that in a specific set of contexts, literary theory is indeed a discourse or, more precisely, a meta-discourse. These are predominantly educational or pedagogic and within it, Literary Theory does indeed exist as a unified object within a particular discursive field. The history of teaching and learning 'theory' over the past fifteen years or so, the proliferation of courses and, in particular, I would argue, textbooks, above all at undergraduate level have substantiated and institutionalised Literary Theory as the unified object of a distinctive meta-discourse.[76] But how is this unity constructed and what does it suggest about how we should read Theory?

The unity of Theory is firstly constituted in relation to another object which is likewise configured as a singularity. The introduction to *Modern Literary Theory* begins by asserting that:

> What characterises contemporary literary theory is, on the one hand, its heterogeneity and on the other, its unprecedented attack on the grounding assumptions of the Anglo-American critical tradition.[77]

Whilst the text goes on to acknowledge a pluralism within the 'Anglo-American critical tradition', this is subordinated to what is conceived as 'a broad consensus, about the author, the nature of the literary work, and the purpose of criticism' and the 'epistemological and ontological certainty' which inform its practices.[78] The argument that Literary Theory is likewise itself a unity is made possible by the relation between the two: the 'unprecedented attack' by contemporary Literary Theory on assumptions of the Anglo-American tradition. The unified object of the challenge proposes the unity of the antagonist. In *Modern Literary Theory*, the naming and renaming of the Anglo-American critical tradition strengthens and consolidates this.

In the blurb, preface and general introduction, the object of critique is variously named as 'the Anglo-American tradition', 'the Anglo-American critical tradition' and 'Anglo-American critical practice'.[79] These locutions are supplemented with a range of more abstract and general formulations: 'the critical orthodoxy' (twice on the same page), 'tradition', 'traditional literary criticism', the orthodoxy (twice on the same page), 'the orthodoxies of literary studies' and 'traditional forms of literary criticism'.[80] The latter in particular act to assert a unity which is the object of literary theory's critique. It also sets a minimum condition on literary theory as practice: it must critique traditional literary criticism. These representations also foreground another attribute of Literary Theory which is likewise unifying. The two objects are the protagonists in a narrative which is iterated in more or less abbreviated or elaborated forms in the editorial apparatus: a narrative of modernity: tradition, convention and orthodoxy are challenged by the new, which is a strongly positive value. This narrative of a valorised new is modalised in various ways in Readers and Introductions. Sometimes it is asserted chronologically, embedded in various narratives of the twentieth century. The cover illustration of the 1985 edition of *A Reader's Guide* is a reproduction of a painting by Pierre Bonnard, 'The Window', and whilst the painting obliquely alludes to the matter of the book - the bottle of ink, the quill pen, the papers - it is the modernist mode of representation that is more strongly proposed as illustrative of the title.[81] The view from the window is the primary focus of the painting, a focus directed by a figure in profile who stands at a balcony observable from the window and watches the scene beyond. The aesthetic challenge of modernism is proposed as an analogy for the intellectual challenge of literary theory. The frequent invocation of 'the

sixties' or the late sixties as a moment of challenge to cultural common-senses, or, more frequently, as a new moment within the new of literary theory draws on a more general narrative of a decade where many long-established institutions and practices were contested.[82] Sometimes the valorised new is rather simplistically bound to its chronological proximity to the present of publication, a 'logic' which can pose classificatory difficulties. 'In recent years the work undertaken by Voloshinov/Bakhtin has proved fertile ground for literary theorists, for though aspects of the work mark it as "of its time", it also contains some remarkably post-structuralist insights'.[83] The fact that the Bakhtin text is dated 1934 presents a problem for a discourse which aligns the new or the modern with the chronological contemporary. Bakhtin is granted here the gift of prescience: a post-structuralist *avant le mot*, a literal avant-gardist. The aspects of his work which mark it as 'of its time' can be bracketed in favour of his remarkable foresight.

The introduction of *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory*, whilst more sceptical about the claims of Theory than some other textbooks also iterates this narrative of modernity.[84] In the first paragraph, Frederic Jameson's argument that Theory has dislodged the boundaries between a multiplicity of theoretical practices and disciplines is cited:

> This 'theoretical discourse' has marked 'the end of philosophy as such' and is 'to be numbered among the manifestations of postmodernism' - that eclectic and self-reflexive mode which for Jameson and others, friend and foe alike, has come to signal a new phase in the correlation between cultural forms and social and economic life.[85]

The naming of Theory as <u>postmodern</u>, a naming which is doubled in force since it is cited and endorsed, and the glossing of it as 'a <u>new</u> phase' clearly proposes an alignment of the object with the new, a new which is transforming, productively destructive and so on. This definition is strongly asserted throughout the introduction, most interestingly perhaps in the assessments of whether theory has succeeded or failed. Something called 'bad theory' is acknowledged, but, the editors argue, it is more important to recognise that the answer does not lie in either 'pure theory' or 'a <u>return</u> to a "theory-free" Romantic or New Criticism'.[86] 'Return' marks a temporal relation between theory and its other, which is prior, old(er): we cannot and should not want to go back.[87]

The valorised new of Literary Theory is also proposed in the ways that new (second, third and even fourth) editions of Readers and Introductions are rationalised.[88] Established titles (and to a lesser extent authors) are refigured to take account of 'recent developments' which inscribe continuous change as both the 'nature' of the object and its practice. Indeed, the continuity of change, or change as the 'new' continuity is

another marker of the modernist narrative. This renders the perimeters of Theory elastic: it is licensed to incorporate and metabolise new developments. But this elasticity is also clearly regulated; the discursive field can only accommodate those developments which contest the 'orthodoxy', for all else is the orthodoxy. The textual and reading relations between tradition and modernity are always proposed in linear terms, where the latter must always come after. A contemporary contestation of the assumptions of Theory is not representable as such: it must always be configured as tradition, its dialogic modernity cannot be represented.[89]

The modern that is Theory is also heterogeneous:

> What characterises contemporary literary theory is, on the one hand its heterogeneity and on the other, its unprecedented attack on the grounding assumptions of the Anglo-American critical tradition.[90]

Indeed heterogeneity or plurality is itself a marker of modernity; the energy, dynamism and vigour manifested by the new in its variety and contestation is opposed to the stolid monolith of tradition. This in turn invokes a sense of the tradition as authority and through the strong contrastive, implicates Literary Theory as anti-authoritarian, which is likewise a positive value. This characterisation is exemplified in *A Practical Reader*, which traces a historical difference within theory itself between the

> singular 'Theory' of the early eighties and the current 'theories': often overlapping and in fruitful dialogue, but also contesting - even within a seemingly given and homogeneous field, such as Marxism or feminism or psychoanalysis.[91]

Heterogeneity is the positive value here, which differentiates early and current theory/ies. Diversity and contestation within are defining attributes of the contemporary life of Literary Theory. But these do not disturb or dissolve the unified object that is being proposed. 'Before it [a proposition] can be called true or false, it must be "in the true"...'[92] The particular truth conditions of a discursive field enable the production of propositions and arguments which conflict with one another. Some of the 'statements' within it may be classified as erroneous or false, but this categorisation takes place within the true of the discursive field. The emphasis on debate and contestation articulates and legitimates the field and its meta-discourse as unified: the possibilities of debate so conceived always presuppose a shared ground of assumptions and practices:

> Like Freud and Marx, Saussure considered the manifest appearance of phenomena to be underpinned and made possible by underlying systems and structures.[93]

Here, three very different discursive formations and traditions are recontextualised, reconfigured within the field of Literary Theory, through an assertion of their comparability.[94] What is proposed is a comparative and contrastive reading practice which draws together texts and concepts rather than treating them as discrete. Such statements are possible because Literary Theory is proposed as unified in its challenge to traditional criticism: this heterogeneity of practices share a contestation of the tradition and its commonplaces.

This relation is also imbricated in the other strongly proposed attribute of theory: its difficulty. Difficulty is a central attribute of the object Literary Theory as it is defined in textbooks: a difficulty that is not only 'linguistic' and conceptual but cultural and frequently thematised. In the introduction to *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory,* the difficulty of the object is proposed in the very rationale and project of the book:

> students have been introduced to theory via theoretical essays which are conceptually and often stylistically far removed from their own experience of reading and writing about literature and which in their unfamiliarity, difficulty and variety, have been perplexing and intimidating.[95]

The difficulty is not just inherent to theory but bound to the problems of teaching it, and the book seeks to alleviate such problems through 'a practical Reader' which collects applications and illustrations of theory in practice.[96] Such representations are typical.[97] In *A Reader's Guide*, written eleven years before (a subsequent edition of which is proposed as a companion volume to *A Practical Reader*), the difficulty of the object and the project of rendering it accessible are strongly proposed on both the back-cover reviews and synopsis and in the introduction. One review comments on the 'lucid explanation' that the book offers, another asserts that it is 'remarkable for its clarity', the third describes it as 'a readable overview' and the opening sentence of the synoptic summary iterates this:[98]

> This is the first, easily accessible account of contemporary theory. It elucidates, clearly, simply and precisely the main developments in Europe and the United States.

Accessibility is the value accorded here, in hyperbolic form, to the book. The modification of 'accessible' by 'easily' and the three modifiers of the verb 'elucidates', itself signifying a practice of clarification, emphasise to the point of tautology the facilitating qualities of the book. Accessibility is proposed here as one of the guide's central appeals but the foregrounding of its clarity presupposes the difficulty of the object it elucidates. The last sentence of the synopsis - '[l]iterary examples are included to make the theories more comprehensible' - strongly presupposes that the theories

would be less comprehensible without literary examples and therefore that they are difficult.

The introduction also figures a third term: the value of the object:

> I decided to undertake the daunting task of writing a reader's guide to this subject mainly because I believe that the questions raised by modern literary theory are important enough to justify the effort of clarification.[99]

The difficulty and value of theory are proposed here by a way of a relation. The 'daunting task' and 'the effort of clarification' are warranted by the value of the object, specifically the questions that modern literary theory raises. The very fact that the exertion may not be enough to secure complete success strengthens the proposal that literary theory is difficult but also valuable. This difficulty is not only linguistic or conceptual, it is cultural. Cultural difficulty is intimated at in *A Practical Reader*, cited above: it is, in part, the unfamiliarity of theoretical writing which presents difficulties to the prescribed reader. But it is specified much more clearly in *A Reader's Guide*, where it is strongly proposed that literary theory is difficult because it challenges a set of common-senses about literature, which are dominant not only in education (including higher education) but within the General Culture, a culture which includes the reader. The early part of the introduction summaries these; '[t]hen, at the end of the 1960s, things began to change'.[100] And since then, this consensus has been actively, and seemingly continuously, challenged:

> To make things worse, most of these strange noises came from abroad. The English are particularly adept at shrugging off intellectual heavyweights from the Continent. We often complain that German theorists are too unwieldy and that the French are incorrigible rationalists. In this way we bolster up our cultural chauvinism and keep the foreign invaders at bay.[101]

The 'strange noises' that are literary theory are unfamiliar, foreign, other, and here, seemingly untranslatable. Literary theory is a challenge to what is represented here as a specifically English variety of common-sense. The defining difficulty of theory is represented here as a problem within the culture that encounters it. Crucial here is that the prescribed reader understands that 'strange noises' is an inadequate representation of literary theory and is not the inscribed writing subject's characterisation and evaluation of the challenge to the consensus. Likewise, the typologising of 'German theorists' and 'the French' within a code of national types is not a signifying practice which the writing subject endorses. And indeed 'the English' are also stereotyped. This is a representation of another's language, marked by certain locutions - 'abroad', 'the Continent', 'bolster' - which contextually inflect 'foreign invaders' with the same accent. The figuration of the English resistance to foreign theory as a tale of combat -

the metaphor 'heavyweights' is revivified to suggest a directly pugilistic sense - and, more particularly, invasion proposes a mock-heroic narrative: mock because the characterisation of intellectual challenge as a war is hyperbolic. This is no story of 'a proud island people' repelling the advances of sundry attackers but rather one of narrow insularity, marked in particular by the phrase 'the Continent' and its other side of the channel vision.[102] But whilst the writing subject does not endorse such values, there is, simultaneously, an acknowledgement of the writing subject's affiliation with Englishness, an affiliation which the prescribed reader is presumed to share: 'we often complain', 'we bolster up'. Literary Theory is defined as a culturally difficult object because it challenges deep-rooted cultural assumptions within a specifically English culture which includes the prescribed reader. The book offers itself as a clarifying translation of those strange noises.

The difficulty of theory once more foregrounds the relations between accessibility and coverage. Difficulty constitutes theory in relation to the prescribed reader: the meta-discourse is in part produced by its address, its orientation to a particular reading constituency. But the reader's difficulty is conceived not in technicist but cultural terms. The prescribed reader inhabits the common-senses of tradition, of the dominants within the General Culture. S/he not only witnesses the assault on common-sense, but is a co-author of the common-sense that theory challenges and denaturalises. The subject position of this discourse (its enunciative modality) is the alternative universe: the commonplaces of theory itself. Theory can only be represented, it seems, as the commonplaces of the new, as the opposite of critical thought as such.

In the introduction I suggested that one of the most distinctive features of Literary Theory textbooks was their representation of a body of texts and discourses and that the reading practices they proposed were centrally concerned with establishing and delimiting particular intertextual relations. Here I have shown how particular intertextual relations are proposed in various classificatory and narrative representations. The meta-discourse of Literary Theory iterates such proposals at a general level. First, Theory as such is proposed as a positive value and practice: it is worth reading and repays the effort which is so strongly thematised. Its characterisation as modern, a challenge to 'tradition', heterodox (and anti-authoritarian) are the strongest markers of this. (It is perhaps worth repeating that these values are presumed to be shared by writing subject and prescribed reader) This evaluation precedes and informs the practices of interpretation and explication, but the conflict between accessibility and coverage, between translation and topicalisation suggest once again very different reading practices. On the one hand, both tradition and earlier theory (usually pre-post-structuralist) are proposed as pretexts which will assist the interpretation and explication which follows. On the other, a proleptic narrative is proposed where the earlier is always-already represented from the

standpoint of the latter: the 'epistemological and ontological certainties' of the tradition can only after all be the modern 'invention' that Theory is.

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[1] Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Library of Babel', in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, edited by Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions, 1964), p.55.

[2] To avoid confusion I will use upper case when referring to the publishing category in question.

[3] Roger Chartier, 'Libraries without Walls' in *The Order of Books*, pp.65-7.

[4] *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* , 3rd Edition (Oxford: OUP, 1973), p.1755, the sense is dated to 1799. In Austen's *Emma*, (London: Penguin, 1995), the young farmer Robert Martin, whose reading practices so confuse Harriet, reads *Elegant Extracts*, an anthology of pieces extracted from mainly eighteenth century sources (p.23 and p.389).

[5]. This is not to suggest that the backgrounding of the original language of 'langue' and 'parole' is fixed. It may be remobilised in particular textual contexts: for example, in a discussion of the semantic ambiguities of 'langue' and 'parole' in French. As Adorno argues in 'On the Use of Foreign Words' in *Notes to Literature: Volume Two* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), foreign words are not simply gradually assimilated and absorbed into the host or other language, over time becoming part of it: they may remain foreign or become domesticated, and then become 'strange' once more.

[6] Walter J. Ong, *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Culture and Religious History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), p.81: analytic commonplaces 'in effect analyse a subject in terms of various headings.'

[7] Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, p.81. Ong is interested in commonplaces as instances of 'oral residues'.

[8] Raman Selden, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* 1st Edition (Brighton: Harvester, 1985), back cover.

[9] Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* 1st Edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p.vii.

[10] See for example Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory* 1st Edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995) pp.227-31. Barry's further reading distinguishes and annotates general guides, reference

books, general Readers and 'applications', significantly in terms of difficulty. On Roger Webster's *Studying Literary Theory: An Introduction* (London: Arnold, 1990), Barry comments: 'very brief but quite often clear when others are not' (p.227). Webster's text, now in its second edition (1996) likewise distinguishes introductory and general works on literary theory in his further reading bibliography (p.130).

[11] For example: 'Provides a collection of the incessantly cited but nevertheless still widely scattered critical texts on postmodernism and literary theory'. This is an advert for a Reader on Postmodernism advertised as 'also of interest' on the back cover of *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader* , 2nd edition, edited by Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh (London: Edward Arnold, 1992, second edition).

[12] Peter Brooker and Peter Widdowson, editors, *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory* (Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall, 1996), p.2.

[13] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory* , p.ix. Both coverage and accessibility are combined in an annotation to Eagleton's *Literary Theory* in Peter Barry's *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995) : 'The first comprehensive guide to be published. Sometimes entertaining, sometimes difficult, and now in need of updating.'

[14] The acknowledgement that inclusiveness is difficult or even impossible marks a strong recognition of its status as a criterion which shapes practice, even when another criterion intervenes: 'I have not tried to give a comprehensive picture of modern critical theory, but rather a guide to the most challenging trends' (*A Reader's Guide,* p.5). Whilst the book is ostensibly shaped by a goal other than comprehensive representation, this other goal must be explicated and rationalised against a presumption of inclusiveness.

[15] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*, p.x.

[16] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.79.

[17] Understanding the novel as a retelling of a sensationalised and intimate piece of town history might also explain the 'we' that is the first word of the novel. The first person plural disappears abruptly after the first scene: the school lesson where Charles Bovary is introduced to master and class. It is the other pupils who constitute the we, which never returns. The last paragraph of the novel which

presses into a post-Emma-and-Charles future also suggests the novel as part of the town's history. Hommais has vanquished six other doctors, and 'has just received the Legion of Honour'. Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (Oxford: World Classics, 1981), p.1 and p.340.

[18] Genette, *Paratexts*, p.294: 'Intertitles or internal titles, are titles, and as such they invite the same kinds of remarks I made earlier'. However Genette distinguishes intertitles from titles in two ways. First, whilst titles are addressed to the 'public' as a whole, intertitles are predominantly only accessible to readers who are 'already involved in reading the text'. Second, whilst a book title is a necessity (even if it is 'Untitled'), intertitles are not (p.294).

[19] Raman Selden, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* ; Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* ; ; Roger Webster, *Studying Literary Theory*; Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*; Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh editors, *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader* ; Peter Brooker and Peter Widdowson editors, *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory* .

[20] Selden, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* , pp.v-vi.

[21] The contents pages of this and the other texts discussed in this section are reproduced in Appendix B

[22] The chapter and other titles of the contents page are: 'Preface', 'Introduction: What is Literature?', chapter 1: 'The Rise of English', chapter 2: 'Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, Reception Theory', chapter 3: 'Structuralism and Semiotics', chapter 4: 'Post-Structuralism', chapter 5: 'Psychoanalysis', 'Conclusion: Political Criticism' (*Literary Theory*, p.v).

[23] See Barry, *Beginning Theory*, pp.v-viii.

[24] These are Rice and Waugh's headings in *Modern Literary Theory.*

[25] In Rice and Waugh's *Modern Literary Theory*, 'The Death of the Author' is the introductory text for Part Two (post-structuralism): 'We have chosen Roland Barthes's essay, 'The Death of the Author, to introduce our survey because it provides a short and useful introduction to some of the significant themes in the development of post-structuralism' (p.113). In Readers, the length of a text may be an important criterion of selection even though many are abridged. See also David Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (London: Longman, 1988), p.166: 'In a famous essay written in 1968, reprinted below, Barthes proclaimed that 'the birth of the reader' must be at the cost of 'the death

of the author' - an assertion that struck at the very heart of traditional literary studies, and that has remained one of the most controversial tenets of post-structuralism.' On Barthes's trajectory, see for example Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, pp.134-142; Selden, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, pp.74-8. Derrida's 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' is another text which is frequently represented as the moment of emergence of post-structuralism. See for example, Selden in *A Reader's Guide*: 'Derrida's paper "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences", given at a symposium at Johns Hopkins University in 1966, virtually inaugurated a new critical movement in the United States'. (p.84). See also Barry, *Beginning Theory*, p.66.

[26] For example: 'More recently with the development of gay and lesbian studies, gendered criticism and "queer theory" on the one hand, and post-colonialism on the other, Wilde has become a focal figure for gay and lesbian criticism and for the newer Irish cultural history. The present chapter brings together five examples of these developments ...' (Brooker and Widdowson, *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory*, p.184). On the exemplary text: 'Cleanth Brooks's essay here exemplifies its [new critical] practice exactly' (p.67, my emphasis and parenthesis).

[27] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.3.

[28] This is obviously a claim which it is difficult to substantiate except at great length. The chapter openings however give some indication of this discreteness. For example, the first sentence of chapter six (Feminism and Feminist Criticism) runs: 'The 'women's movement' of the 1960's was not, of course, the start of Feminism' (p.2). Although this chapter makes reference to feminist appropriations of psychoanalysis and post-structuralism (p.124) and both are preceding chapters in the book, what is more strongly asserted is the 'independence' of feminist criticism and theory. This is strongly marked in the summary list of 'what feminist critics do': 'rethink the canon, revalue women's experience, examine representations of women in literature by men and women' and so on (p.134). The chapter on post-structuralism is an exception however, beginning with the heading 'some theoretical differences between structuralism and post-structuralism' (p.61).

[29] See Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, pp.v - vi.

[30] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.4

[31] Although 'radical' occurs in the first paragraph of the introduction - 'literary theory has effected a radical transformation' (p.xi) - none of its senses are explicated.

[32] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.194.

[33] Said seems to present a slight classificatory problem in this respect, but although 'Said seems not be mobilising any specific post-structuralist theory, his language and style are clearly conditioned by his theoretical knowledge' (*Modern Literary Theory*, p.194).

[34] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.195.

[35] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.196.

[36] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.196. 'The Order of Discourse' is described as 'balanced between [a] shift in emphasis' (p.196).

[37] Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Men', p.235.

[38] Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Men', p.237.

[39] 'Of Mimicry and Men': 'ambivalence', p.235 and p.237; 'splitting' p.235; 'castration', p.235; 'desire', p.235, p.237 and p.239.

[40] 'Of Mimicry and Men', *Modern Literary Theory*, pp.237-8.

[41] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.196.

[42] It is also interesting here that the claim that the text is autonomously interesting is seen to require assertion.

[43] By local textual context, I mean that original and translation are co-present in the same text within the editional apparatus, as opposed to the examples I looked at earlier where the original (the title) is translated in another part of the apparatus (the contents page).

[44] Roman Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' in Reuben E. Brower ed., *On Translation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

[45] Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' in *On Translation*, edited by Reuben E. Brower (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp.232-9, p.233.

[46] This is a point made by Jenny Thomas. Cited in Jonathan Culpepper, 'Why Relevance Theory Does Not Explain "The Relevance of Reformulations" in *Language and Literature* 3, 1 (1994), pp.43-48, p.47

[47] Diane Blakemore, 'Relevance, Poetic Effects and Social Goals: A Reply to Culpepper' in *Language and Literature* 3, 1 (1994), pp.49-59, p.54.

[48] See for example Bakhtin's 'Discourse in the Novel', pp.270-275. In Kristeva's case, the concepts and assumptions that sanction linguistic theories are an important theme in many of her early writings but see in particular 'The System and the Speaking Subject' in *The Kristeva Reader*, pp.24-33, and 'The Ethics of Linguistics' in *Desire in Language* , pp23-35.

[49] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Words from Abroad' in *Notes to Literature: Volume One* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp.185-199.

[50] Adorno, 'Words from Abroad', p.190.

[51] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London and New York: Routledge: 1995).

[52] See in relation to Venuti's formalism, Francis Mulhern's review essay of *The Translator's Invisibility* entitled 'Re-Writing Degree Zero', in *The Present Lasts a Long Time: Essays in Cultural Politics* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998), pp.164-170: 'However, the concept of resistancy cannot claim exemption from its own critical dialectic. Venuti emphasises the historical variability of translation norms, and his analyses observe a strict contextualising discipline. Yet the key critical opposition between domesticating and foreignising strategies never varies so radically as to reverse itself' (p,169). He goes on to argue that Venuti, when deprecating the representational stereotypes of orientalist writing never considers that 'what is foreignising may assume the degraded conservative shape of exoticism'. He develops this argument in relation to realism: Venuti, in valorising a modernist poetics as the shape and form of resistancy, neglects to consider the ways in which an ideal-typical realism, the rhetorical ideal of which is '(a mirage but that is not the point) literalism: unadorned, univocal, quasi-veridical ... Ideal-typical realism valorises transparency as a critical instrument, not an anodyne; its plainness is an ideological abrasive' (p.170). I will return to this issue below.

[53] See for example, Raman Selden, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (Brighton, Harvester, 1985). Consider the following discussion of Genette which is broadly typical of the ways in which certain kinds of literary knowledge are figured as shared with the prescribed reader: 'Narratives

are nearly always impure in this sense, whether the element of "discourse" enters via the voice of the narrator (Fielding, Cervantes), a character-narrator (Sterne), or through epistolary discourse (Richardson). Genette believes that narrative reaches its highest degree of purity in Hemingway and Hammett, but that with the nouveau roman, narrative began to be completely swallowed up in the writer's own discourse' (pp.62-63).

[54] Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, p.97.

[55] Nor is the lexeme 'langue' marked strongly here as French: Saussure's nationality is not identified, although his name could suggest a Francophone.

[56] See in particular pp.116-118: 'One of the most important critics of Saussurean linguistics was the Russian philosopher and literary theorist Mikail Bakhtin ... Bakhtin had also been responsible for what remains the most cogent critique of Russian Formalism.'

[57] Simon Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.i.

[58] *Bakhtinian Thought*, pp.22-40.

[59] *Bakhtinian Thought*, p.25.

[60] Selden, *A Reader's Guide*, pp.54-55. There has been one modification to the text of the example in subsequent editions. 'Since joining' has been replaced by 'When the British joined' (from the 3rd edition, p.105). The re-temporalisation effects a greater distance between the prescribed reader and 'The British'. It is, however interesting, that although 'Common Market' is historically accurate, it too has a temporally distancing effect (and is easily misread as an archaism).

[61] Indeed conceptualising translation in an intertextual and therefore textual-context-sensitive way is one way out of the formalist cul-de-sac which still exerts considerable force in certain trajectories of translation studies (as the influential work of Venuti instances). The final example attests the possibilities of intertextually 'context-sensitive' analysis in identifying a single translative strategy which simultaneously both domesticates and foreignises: the example speaks the language (and discourse) of semiotics 'fluently', and 'resists' familiar or commonsensical representations of the routine practices it renders. But the foreignising of traffic lights as a signifying system is motivated, not by resistancy, but by the desire for a facilitating domestication.

[62] Mary Eagleton, editor., *Feminist Literary Criticism* (Harlow: Longman, 1991), p.8; Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory* , p.124; Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, *Feminisms* (Houndsmill: Macmillan, 1997), p.x.

[63] The definition of and opposition between the two most probably entered scholarly feminist discourse through Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Coutivron, *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1981). The introduction begins: '"We translate what the American women write, they never translate our texts."' This quotation from Hélène Cixous is offered as a rationale for the book: they are translating what the 'French women' write, in the hope of developing a dialogue. In the process, they elaborate certain differences between (initially) American feminists and French ones. For example, whilst French feminist thinking is strongly shaped by Marxism, psychoanalysis and 'philosophy' in general terms, 'American feminists ... tend to be focused on problem solving, on the individual fact ... Their style of reasoning, with few exceptions, follows the Anglo-American empirical, inductive, anti-speculative tradition' (p.xi). The topos was entrenched by Toril Moi's *Sexual-Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London: Methuen, 1985), the structure of which is ordered by this division.

[64] James C. Raymond, 'Enthymemes, Examples and Rhetorical Method' in *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse* , edited by Robert J. Connors, Lisa S. Ede and Andrea A. Lunsford (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), pp.140-151.

[65] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*, p.x.

[66] Although, preferences for a particular type or set of types of theory is another matter: 'though we have our own preferences, our job is not to foist these on others' (final paragraph of the introduction, p.4). An acknowledgement of partiality and an insistence on the fact that this will neither 'distort' representations or be 'enforced' upon readers is a variation of the demands of coverage. I will return to the issue of the positive value that is accorded to Literary Theory below.

[67] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.ix.

[68] Barry does describe 'liberal humanism' as a shorthand and 'hostile' term for a particular set of assumptions on p.3, but there is no elaboration of who the hostiles are and why they might be so.

[69] Barry, *Beginning Theory*, p.2.

[70] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.23.

[71] This is hardly an uncontroversial definition of metalanguage either. Conventionally, the 'object language' is defined more broadly as the language about which the metalanguage speaks, which the metalanguage makes its object. An object language is clearly not necessarily referential. See for example, Barthes's *Elements of Semiology* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), p.93: 'Nothing in principle prevents a metalanguage from becoming in its turn the language-object of a new metalanguage.'

[72] One of the key texts which has been read to justify and rationalise such a concept of Theory and its problematic place within an English intellectual context is Perry Anderson's 'Components of the National Culture' in *New Left Review* 50 (July/August, 1968), pp.3-57. Likewise the practices of the journal *Screen*, particularly in the middle and late seventies where the commitment was not merely to film but to how it could be variously theoretically / philosophically framed.

[73] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), p.38: 'The rules of formation are conditions of existence (but also of coexistence, maintenance, modification, and disappearance) in a given discursive division'. Likewise it is only possible to say 'that we are dealing with a discursive formation' if a 'regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations)' can be identified or defined (p.38).

[74] The formation of objects, concepts, enunciative modalities and strategies are discussed in chapters three to six, inclusive, pp.40-70. Within strategy, Foucault distinguishes between theory and theme, the latter less coherent, less rigorous and less stable (p.64) but treats both together.

[75] 'Within its own limits, each discourse recognises true and false propositions; but it pushes back a whole teratology of knowledge beyond its margins... but perhaps there are no errors in the strict sense, for error can only arise and be decided inside a definite practice ... a proposition must fulfil heavy requirements to be able to belong to the grouping of a discipline; before it can be called true or false, it must be "in the true" as Canguilhem would say. ' Foucault, 'The Order of Discourse' in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, edited by Robert Young (London, Routledge, 1981), pp48-79, p.60. Although Foucault is specifically discussing the discipline as a 'principle of control over the

production of discourse (p.61), the meaning and force of 'in the true' as a condition of discursive production is clearly not exclusive to the formative and regulatory practices of disciplines.

[76] And indeed, a telling of this history is itself increasingly a part of textbook introductions. See for example, the introduction to *A Practical Reader in Contemporary Literary Theory* which charts a shift from the first Introductions and Readers to 'the quest for a second-generation textbook which will join theory with practice' (p1), which *A Practical Reader* proposes itself as.

[77] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.1.

[78] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.1. This pluralism is indexed in the naming of some of the tradition's varieties: 'literary history, literary biography, moral aesthetic criticism and ... the New Criticism' but these had 'until recently managed to co-exist in a state of fairly "stable disequilibrium" based on a broad consensus about ...' (p.1).

[79] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.ix, p.1 and p.3 respectively.

[80] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.2, p.2, p.3, p3, p.4, p.4 respectively.

[81] The cover is reproduced in Appendix B.

[82] See for example, *A Reader's Guide*, p1: 'Then at the end of the 1960s, things began to change'. Arguably, one of the reasons why 'The Death of the Author' has become one of the emblematic texts of post-structuralism or/and its moment of emergence is that it was first published in 1968.

[83] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.194.

[84] *A Practical Reader* is more sceptical than say *Modern Literary Theory* in the sense that it acknowledges what are represented as some of theory's excesses, its 'self-importance, its hermeticism, or uncontrolled pluralism' (p.2), and is concerned that 'the radical politicising theory of the post-1960's years has failed to produce a criticism to match its radicalising intentions' (p.3). And indeed this 'scepticism' is itself becoming a topos. The 2001 (4th) edition of *Modern Literary Theory*: 'At worst ... "theory" can degenerate into substantive dogma or an inflexible and a priori, pseudo scientific framework whose interpretative results become as predictable as a well-confirmed scientific explanation: that all texts are "about" their own conditions of indeterminacy, for example, or that all texts contain their own subversive strategies ...' However such a representation of Theory is immediately undermined: '[t]his is of course to caricature "theory" in terms which are now the commonplace

judgements of its enemies and detractors' (p.1). What is interesting here is that criticism of theory seems to automatically render its speaker an enemy or detractor.

[85] Brooker and Widdowson, *A Practical Reader*, pp.1-2.

[86] *A Practical Reader*, p.4.

[87] And indeed the introduction of *A Practical Reader* strongly asserts that one of the central gains of theory has been to draw attention to the always-and-already theoretical 'nature' of any practice of reading pp.3-4. This is a staple of the discourse. See for example, the 1993 (3rd) edition of *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* : 'even the apparently "spontaneous" discussion of literary texts is dependent on the de facto (if less self conscious) theorising of older generations ... full of dead theory which is sanctified by time ...' (pp.3-4). Note here the assertion of tradition by mode of analogy with religion - 'sanctified' - and the implicated secular mood of the new.

[88] The updating of such texts is standard practice. *A Reader's Guide* is currently in its 4th edition, as is *Modern Literary Theory*. The changes vary from minor - for example in the case of Eagleton's *Literary Theory* to substantial re-editing and re-writing, the representation of entirely 'new' bodies or work and/or the exclusion of others.

[89] If such writing is represented at all. One of the most noticeable features of such textbooks is the non-representation of criticisms of theory from outside the field.

[90] Rice and Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory*, p.1.

[91] Brooker and Widdowson, *A Practical Reader*, p.2.

[92] 'The Order of Discourse', p.60, my parenthesis.

[93] *Modern Literary Theory*, p.1.

[94] Indeed Foucault assigns each of these authors the title of 'founders' or 'initiators' of discursive practices, 'establishing the endless possibility of discourse' ... '[T]hey not only made possible a certain number of analogies that could be adopted, but as importantly, they also made possible a certain number of differences. They cleared a space for the introduction of elements other than their own.' 'What is an Author?' in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, pp.131-6.

[95] Brooker and Widdowson, *A Practical Reader*, p.4.

[96] *A Practical Reader*, p.4.

[97] But not universal. In the preface to *Literary Theory*, Eagleton identifies a constituency who complain that 'literary theory is impossibly esoteric - who suspect it as an arcane, elitist enclave akin to nuclear physics' (p.vii) but then brusquely offers a rebuttal: 'literary theory is in fact no more difficult than many theoretical enquiries and a good deal easier than some' (p.vii). The substance of this somewhat curt rejoinder is the exception rather than the rule.

[98] The first review is by Chris Baldick, in the *TLS*; the second is by Christopher Norris in *British Book News*; and the third is unsigned and comes from *English Literature in Transition.*

[99] Selden, *A Reader's Guide*, p.2.

[100] *A Reader's Guide*, p.1.

[101] *A Reader's Guide*, p.1.

[102] This passage makes oblique and topicalised reference to the critique of 'English empiricism' referred to earlier. The Anglo-American versus French feminism commonplace, discussed above, is also clearly a version of this.

Closing Remarks

Interpretative possibilities are many and rich, yet interpretations are, for the most part, few and sparse. This might stand as the stark and unnuanced conclusion of this thesis, which seeks to understand why both these statements are true, and why some interpretations are more probable, often far more probable, than others. Intertextual and inferential theories both offer powerful accounts of why interpretative possibilities are many; but they diverge strongly as to whether interpretation is, for the most part, 'sparse'. For the most part, intertextual theories assume that, like interpretative possibilities, interpretations are many and rich: possibility is conflated with its instantiation as practice. Inferential theories (and pragmatic theories more generally) argue that the interpretative process constrains or 'thins' interpretative possibilities. This suggests a congruence between my conclusion and pragmatic common-sense, but it is purely formal. Inferential theories neither acknowledge nor recognise the full extent of interpretative possibilities and the real character of the constraints that delimit them in practice. In these closing remarks, my aim is to elaborate the conclusion abbreviated above by addressing three interrelated questions. First, what emerges from the exposition and critique of intertextual and inferential theories? Second, what is the 'positive' conception of interpretation which the critique make possible? Third, how do the case-studies substantiate this account?

1.

What emerges from the exposition and critique of the first three chapters is first, a certain congruence between intertextual and inferential theories. Both take the utterance as their object: the utterance in opposition to the 'semantic' sentence in the case of inferential theories, the text reconceived as utterance or utterances in intertextual ones. In both cases, 'utterance' marks a theoretical extension of the object to take account of addresser and addressee: a rhetorical concern with practice, purpose and effects. Both traditions argue that utterance meaning cannot be wholly explained by en-de-coding (or, in Grice's case, convention): a single linguistic system - whether conceived as langue or as a grammar - neither fully determines nor exhausts utterance meaning. Following on from this, utterances are constitutively ambiguous or polyvocal. But in neither case are the explanatory limits of the linguistic system the warrant or rationale for a flight from systematicity per se. The fact that some meaning 'eludes' a singular en-de-coding process does not entail that it is ungoverned and unpredictable; rather its 'governance' must be sought elsewhere. Both traditions pursue alternative accounts of what, beyond a linguistic system, might order meaning - the relations between a multiplicity of signifying systems, an inferential process.[1] Finally, in both traditions, context is

posited as a defining and explanatory category. Context is constitutive of utterance production and interpretation: it is a defining attribute of the utterance, which is always spoken by and to particular subjects at particular times and places, and this in turn has important implications for the knowledges which are inscribed and invoked in utterances and which are central to their production and interpretation.

These very congruences foreground certain fundamental differences in the way that each account formulates its key concepts, shaped by the very different questions which each theory addresses and the discursive traditions of which they are a part. In the work of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva, the central question is: what governs the possibilities of utterance production and utterance meaning? In inferential theories, the key question is: how does the interpretative process work? These very different orientations lead to distinctive formulations of the concepts of utterance, the processes of meaning production and reception, context, speaker/writer and hearer/reader. In formal terms, the most important difference is that whilst in inferential theories (and pragmatic theories more generally), each concept remains clearly distinguishable and, in important senses, discrete from the others, in intertextual theories the concepts mesh in their definition.

In intertextual theories, utterance or text is the central concept through which textual production, context and the writing or reading subject are defined. The utterance is always a participant in a complex chain, oriented backwards in its responses to previous utterances and forward in its anticipation of subsequent ones. It is from its social and historical place in this chain that it derives its many signifying possibilities. These relations are inscribed in the utterance itself, which is therefore never a singularity, but always a set of relations between utterances. The utterance is never a discrete object, but part of a dynamic and historical process, the meaning of which can only be understood in relation to the other utterances which constitute it and are transformed by it. In the writings of Bakhtin and Kristeva in particular, the tracing of patterns of similarity and difference, continuity and transformation within and between texts is not a descriptive literary-critical practice, but an explanatory account of how meanings are produced. The account of text is therefore simultaneously an account of textual production, best understood as a process of re-signification. Context is itself textual: the relations between the range of signifying practices which make the utterance possible and which are inscribed within it. Likewise the subject is conceived most explicitly and consistently in Kristeva in textual terms, as inscription. And, as with context, the subject is complexly social and historical. The utterance is never authored by a single speaker or oriented to a single addressee. Writing and reading imbricate their subjects in a web of social processes and relations with languages, varieties, genres and texts, and with the relative and varying authority and value these command.

Inferential theories treat the utterance or utterance exchange as a particular and relatively discrete object embedded in a highly particular event which is completed and resolved in the process of interpretation: a particular kind of evidence from which interpretations may be derived. Whilst the presence of linguistic convention or the linguistic system clearly establishes a continuity between speech events, what is at stake is the particular meaning of this utterance for these speaker-hearers in this particular here-and-now, which system or convention cannot determine. In both Gricean and Relevance-based accounts, the particular meaning of the situation-bound utterance is governed by a single communicative or cognitive principle, which orders its interpretation. In Relevance, the continuity and generality of principle are matched by a continuity and generality of processes: a preliminary decoding generates semantic material, which is then subject to inferential operations. Whilst intertextual theories define context from the standpoint of the text, inferential theories conceive context as the sub-set of knowledges mobilised, deployed and/or produced by the hearer within the interpretative process which are likewise subject to the general communicative or cognitive principle. And while context is frequently mobilised and/or produced through inferential operations on the utterance, it always remains clearly distinguishable from it because of the focus on moment-to-moment interpretative procedures and its particular purpose-bound definition. Context is likewise distinguishable from the speaker-hearer, not the sum of the subject's knowledge and knowing but the knowledge required to interpret this particular utterance in this particular here-and-now. The speaker-hearer is, in turn, clearly distinguished from the text. Whilst Relevance now foregrounds the role of the speaker's expectations of the hearer in shaping the utterance, both speaker and hearer remain distinct from the text.[2] This in turn foregrounds the very different conceptions of the subject that inhabit inferential and intertextual accounts. In both Gricean and Relevance-based accounts, speaker meaning is central and can be distinguished from other kinds of utterance meaning (though it may, in the case of Grice, coincide with those). Indeed such a separation between language and the speaker is a requirement of inferential theories, which posit that speaker meaning diverges from the meanings produced by conventions or codes. In both cases, speaker meaning is not only distinguishable from other kinds of meaning, it has authority (Sperber and Wilson's distinction between implicatures and implications is a clear instance of this). Such theories always ascribe a particular and identifiable intention in speaking and a 'thinning' of interpretative possibilities to those that the speaker intended; it is the recovery of these which the account of the interpretative process must be able to yield. This speaker is a distinguishable singularity who always pre-exists any social act or process, including those of communication.

The order of exposition in chapters one and two, and the critique in chapter three draw out both the strengths and weaknesses of these two accounts. The intertextual

theories of Voloshinov, Bakhtin and Kristeva offer the most powerful account of how meanings are produced; inferential theories, and most particularly Relevance, offer the most convincing and rigorous explanation of the interpretative process. At the same time, however, both theories suffer from internal weaknesses and inconsistencies; each is revealed to have fundamental problems when it is exposed to the scrutiny of the other; and both ignore a set of processes which are central to the governing of the possibilities of textual production and reception: those of publishing. To take each of these in turn. Intertextual theories do not take adequate account of the institutional modalities of meaning. Given the emphasis that Voloshinov gives to speech types, the role of genre in Bakhtin, and Bakhtin and Kristeva's formulations of the heteroglossia and the General Culture, which each suggest a dynamic between official, sanctioned and legitimate meanings and 'unofficial' ones, it is surprising that there is little or no place given to the role of institutional sites and practices in the production of meaning. Second, whilst Bakhtin, and in particular Kristeva, foreground the complex historicity of the totality of signifying practices and of texts themselves, and the varying authority of different signifying practices, what is lacking in the definition of text as 'dialogic' or intertextual is a developed sense of its own internal hierarchies: the frequent dominance of one or more languages within the text and the limits that this effects on signifying possibilities. Third, in the writings of Bakhtin and Kristeva, there is a tendency to explore and valorise textual practices which radically transform some sub-set of the heteroglossia or General Culture. This not only weakens the concept of context, sometimes subordinated to a residually formalist dominant of disturbance; it also means that not enough attention is given to thinking the many instances of textual production as <u>variation</u>, rather than as the more radical transformation. The theory itself makes this possible, given its particular conception of text as social and historical, but there is little or no detailed investigation of the processes by which certain signifying practices, and in particular genres, endure, albeit in modified forms.

Sperber and Wilson explicitly set out to remedy a set of problems in Gricean theory, whilst also acknowledging his contribution to their thinking. A number of the key moves and tenets of Relevance are, then, critical responses to Grice, most obviously the critique of the mutual knowledge hypothesis (and their alternative formulation of mutual manifestness), the rejection of the Cooperative Principle and the rebuttal of a model of communicative practice which relies on a fundamental distinction between adherence to a set of rules (the maxims) and their flouting or exploitation. Whilst these criticisms are valid, Relevance shares a set of problems with Grice. These are, most importantly, an exclusively rationalist conception of the subject and his/her practice which leaves no place for an explanation of the irrational as effect in signification; and the fundamental and decisive role accorded to the speaker's intended meaning which is

what must be recovered and what has authority. Yet this emphasis sits uneasily with the lack of attention accorded to the process whereby speakers identify and articulate intentions. This is particularly marked in Relevance, where the detailed account of the complexities of the interpretative procedure foreground the absence of an equivalently detailed account of meaning production. There is a further internal problem in Relevance, which does impact on its account of the interpretative process, namely, the uneven relations between effort and effects, most visible in Relevance-based accounts of poetic language where there seems little or no warrant for the continuation of interpretation after the 'criterion' of relevance has been met.

Each theory also exposes the limits of the other. The great strength of inferential theories is the rigour with which the interpretative process is theorised. This is particularly true of Relevance where the accounts of how contexts are mobilised and/or produced, and the introduction of the concept of explicature are particularly valuable as a model for the kind of detailed questions that a theory of interpretation is required to address. This foregrounds the lack of specificity in intertextual theories of reception. Further, the clear distinction that inferential theories make between the processes of production and reception exposes a fundamental weakness in intertextual theories of reception, where reading is inertially inferred from writing and there is no sustained attempt to specify the former's distinctiveness. Inferential theories seek to substantiate this other process, this 'other production', in precise terms. Most fundamentally, intertextual theories cannot entertain the possibility of another systematic process at work in the making of meaning; inferential theories do just this by theorising inferencing as a central interpretative process. Intertextual theories of reception can only posit recoding, yet this cannot generate an adequate account of interpretation or reading. Intertextual theories of production theorise the text as both like and unlike other texts meaning that interpretation must involve the reader 'registering' these patterns of similarity and difference; intertextual theories of reception stress the location of the text within a pattern of intertextual relations. Neither of these processes can be adequately captured by 'recoding'; rather they require a concept of inference in order to be adequately specified.

The great strength of intertextual theories lies in the detailed accounts of the ways in which textual form both produces and delimits signifying possibilities, a focus which is entirely missing in Grice and Sperber and Wilson. Where inferential theories see a single language, intertextual theories see languages: a multiplicity of varieties, registers and genres converging on the ground conventionally identified as a national language, which produce and delimit the totality of signifying possibilities. These languages do not offer various different ways of 'saying the same thing', in contrast with much pragmatic common-sense, which assumes a common propositional core of meaning, nor are they subject to a singular logic which renders their differences

superficial and formal; rather they articulate different ways of knowing the world. These languages and the knowledges they inscribe are not a set of discreet alternatives; they are constituted by their relations with each other, the overarching order of which is set by the relations between dominant and subordinate social forces and their differential political and cultural authority. These relations inscribe the always-already social character of the subjects who speak them, their solidarities and/or conflicts with others, their confirmation and/or contestation of certain social and cultural values. Intertextual theories expose the explanatory weakness inherent in the individualism of inferential theories - which underestimate the number and range of interpretative possibilities assuming that speaker-hearers share knowledges and values which require no explanation. This is clearly the case with Grice. Relevance ostensibly makes no such error: the insistent underlining of the idiosyncrasies of speaker-hearers, and the awareness of the multiplicity of interpretation-conclusions that the utterance-premise may generate, are the strongest markers of this break with Gricean assumptions. Yet Relevance is itself blind to the extent of interpretative possibilities, understood as socially and culturally differential and often contested; this is demonstrated by the failure to identify these in its own examples, as well as in its constructed speaker-hearers, who are precisely not idiosyncratic, but share knowledges and values (and those of the prescribed readership of the book). This underestimation is matched by another: the inability to conceptualise the role of the intertextual in delimiting interpretative possibilities. The principles which are deemed to govern interpretation (The Cooperative Principle, the Principle of Relevance) cannot account for the full range of signifying possibilities, and do not even do the work that is assigned to them. Further, inferential theories acknowledge only a interpretative process, whereas intertextual theories of reception extend the notion of writing practices to reading practices, which are always co-present with and shaping of the process of interpretation in any interpretative event. Interpretation is always more than a singular process, always intersecting with interpretative practices, and with the other practices of reading: explication and evaluation.

In addition to this, both traditions share a fundamental problem which is to ignore the role of processes other than 'speaking' or 'writing' in the production and interpretation of meaning. Inferential theories (and, in fact, most strong pragmatic theories) treat an idealised 'everyday' speech as the basis and model from which all interpretation as process and result can be theorised: where writing is acknowledged, it is treated as interchangeable with speech. And while intertextual theories expose the flaws in the canonical speech situation from which inferential accounts are modelled, the intertextual concept of 'writing' ignores the role of other processes, specifically those of publishing in the production and interpretation of meaning.

2.

The exposition and critique of the first three chapters make it possible to formulate an alternative model of the interpretative process, which takes the form of a critical synthesis of the two traditions. This has three interconnected elements: modifications to the central concepts deployed in both traditions; the reconceptualisation of the interpretative process; and, the reformulation of the goal of any strong and plausible theory of interpretation. To take each of these in turn.

The strengths and weaknesses of inferential and intertextual accounts lead to an alternative model of the central concepts required by any model of interpretation. First, clear theoretical distinctions must be made between textual production and reception, between interpretation and reading, and between process and practice. Inferential accounts, and Relevance particularly, make a strong distinction between production and interpretation, suggesting that whilst these processes are to some extent congruent, they cannot be collapsed into one another as many intertextual accounts presume. However, inferential accounts do not consider the distinction between reading and interpretation: that reading is always more than interpretation, involving simultaneously the processes of evaluation and explication. Whilst many intertextual accounts have drawn attention to the other processes encompassed by reading (and Bakhtin's work, in particular, is suggestive of the role of evaluation), it is necessary to theoretically distinguish interpretation from reading in order to assess the role of evaluation and explication in shaping interpretation. A clear theoretical distinction must also be made between an interpretative or reading process and an interpretative or reading practice, again in order to be able to identify their relations within any occasion of reading. Intertextual theories of reception have, in the main, retreated from the question of process in favour of practice, whilst inferential theories do not acknowledge the role of practices in shaping interpretation.

Each of these distinctions foregrounds the ways in which both intertextual and inferential theories ignore or misidentify the 'medium' of interpretation, failing to see that 'writing' is governed by the institutions, processes and practices of publishing. Inferential theories treat writing as a variety and modification of speech; intertextual theories render writing a complex and conflictual social and cultural process, they do not take account of publishing institutions, processes and practices as modalities which shape interpretation. The 'horizon of the publishable' strengthens and specifies the conceptual distinctions identified above. It also modifies the definitions of text and textual production. The horizon of the publishable - what it is possible to publish at a particular moment - is, as I argue in chapter four, a complex horizon which binds the possibilities of publishing with other processes and institutions. It effects a further qualitative distinction between production and reception. Both the concepts of text and textual production encompass the processes of editing, design, production and

marketing as well as composition, processes which are inscribed in the edition, where they are instantiated as practices which shape interpretation and reading. The horizon of the publishable in turn contributes to an understanding of how some signifying practices can become institutionalised, varying minimally across time and space (and how others do not), and how certain patterns of intertextual relations become established.

The exposition and critique likewise call for a reconceptualisation of the interpretative process which builds on the strengths and remedies the errors and weaknesses in the two traditions. The interpretative process involves the reader in both 'selecting' and developing one or more interpretative possibilities; but these processes are not governed by a single communicative or cognitive principle, or by a single order of knowledge. Interpretation is a substantially inferential process, but what governs inferencing are intertextual relations which produce and delimit the range of interpretative possibilities. The 'evidence' that the utterance or text provides, the contexts or knowledges mobilised by the hearer or reader, and the logics which make possible inferential operations and the production of implicatures, are shaped by textual relations. The contexts which are mobilised and/or produced by the text and the situation of interpretation are likewise textual, discursive and plural.

An account of the processes of interpretation must therefore be able to identify, as far as it is possible, the multiple interpretative possibilities of the text, and delineate their graduated contingency. In a given and specifiable situation of utterance, which interpretation or interpretations is/are most, more, less and least likely? And, equally importantly, why? Whilst intertextual theories of reception tend to be preoccupied with distinguishing or simply asserting the range of interpretative possibilities rather than their relative possibility, inferential theories recognise the centrality of explaining how one interpretation is reached instead of another or others. However, whilst inferential theories ask the right kinds of question, they do not propose satisfactory answers. And at the same time, because they treat utterance interpretation as a process of resolution, they are not well equipped to handle the graduated character of contingency. These inadequacies render the 'pragmatic question' more rather than less important. First, there are a range of interpretative possibilities which are not susceptible to pragmatic explanation. Second, a delineation of the graduated contingencies of possible interpretations is a necessary and central element in any account of interpretation. Indeed, the very unlikeliness of an interpretative possibility being transformed into an interpretation may tell us a great deal about what governs the varying contingencies of the interpretative process.

3.

The case-studies substantiate the model of communication outlined in chapter four in two broad ways; first, they continue the critique which is itself inscribed in the model; second, they seek to substantiate the claims and arguments outlined there. In both chapters five and six, texts are conceived in rhetorical terms, following and extending the focus of inferential and intertextual theories. The exploration of distinct rhetorical practices - classification, translation and topicalisation - is an obvious marker of this emphasis which informs every aspect of the analysis. The relations of knowledge which are textually inscribed between writing subject and prescribed reader are a central preoccupation in both chapters, with the aim of identifying particular patterns of inference and the relation of these to distinct and distinguishable discourses. The scope of rhetorical analysis is also extended to take account of what intertextual and inferential theories ignore in their accounts of both print production and 'reading': the processes of book publishing. The objects of the case-studies are categories constituted by publishing processes; and it is the edition, conceived as the site where the totality of production practices intersect and as the material form in which the reader encounters the text, which is the focus of the analysis in each case.

Within this extended rhetorical framework, the mode of intertextual analysis begins by delineating a wide range of interpretative and reading possibilities - take as an example, the multiple classifications of *Pride and Prejudice* which are elaborated as proffered by the cover text, design and illustration of the Penguin Classic edition - and then goes to examine which of these are proposed most strongly, and how others are diminished and/or backgrounded and why. Given the role accorded to textual form and textual relations in the processes of signification, the mode of analysis is designed to register and represent both the micro-intertextual shifts that may take place within the dialogisms of a multiaccentual word or utterance, and the broader patterns and relations which extend across longer passages of the text, or the text and edition as a whole. The relative strength or weakness of interpretative and reading possibilities is shown to be shaped by a variety of interconnected factors which pertain both to the 'internal' relations of the text and the place of these within the General Culture. First and most obviously, textual form not only shapes but orders interpretative possibilities, strengthening some, diminishing or backgrounding others. For example, Dentith's analogical rendering of langue and parole as types of pebble versus all the pebbles on the beach makes possible the (false) interpretation-conclusion that langue is a practice of classification, but the intertextual context, including the analogical mode of representation foregrounds science as the ground of comparison - geology and structural linguistics are both scientific practices - and weakens (though does not cancel) this interpretative possibility.[3] Second, whilst any text comprises a multiplicity of languages, these do not have the same force in interpretative terms. Intertextual

theories often tend to ignore the frequent dominance of a small number of languages (sometimes only one) within a text which subordinate and transform its other languages and signifying possibilities. For example, whilst at certain moments Conrad's introduction to *Pride and Prejudice* proposes a historical reading of the novel, its dominant discourse identifies literary value with a transcendence of history thus backgrounding history as an interpretative context. This example in shows how the relative authority of genres and discourses within the General Culture shape and hierarchise interpretations. Both case-studies draw attention to this in different ways. The definition of the classic as 'a text of enduring value', which is multiply inscribed in the editional apparatus of classics is a strong interpretative proposal in significant part because, within the General Culture, it has the authority of a commonplace. It may be at variance with other definitions of the text within the edition be they general - the acknowledgement of the text's opacity which are also central to the apparatus - or particular - Jones's historicist reading for example - but its strength as an interpretative context derives not only from its multiple iterations within the edition, but from its status within the General Culture. In the case of Literary Theory textbooks, one of the avowed goals is the representation of the controversial, the 'anti-commonplace' (and the attendant challenge to common-senses): that which has little or no authority within the General Culture. Yet the acknowledged difficulties that such alien concepts and discourses present to the prescribed reader can effect strong interpretative proposals which can re-naturalise the unfamiliar and translate it into familiar commonsense terms - Eagleton's translative representation of langue and parole is clearly not 'intended' to contest the value of abstraction as practice, but the iterations of the 'thing itself' are most likely to mobilise a discourse which constitutes the abstract as a rarefied plane unsuited to grappling with 'real' objects and problems, because the discourse which constructs this opposition is so readily accessible within the General Culture.[4]

The three broad modes of intertextual practice examined - translation, classification and topicalisation - all foreground the discursive character of the knowledges that are deployed in the interpretative and reading process, and the ways in which inferential patterns are shaped by the logics of particular discourses. Classification always locates a text in a network of textual, including discursive, relations. It is also the most general practice considered and one that is fundamental to all publishing processes. It is also a practice which foregrounds the relations between edition, publishing practices and the horizon of the publishable. Therefore whilst the three classic editions discussed in chapter five all strongly propose *Pride and Prejudice* as a work of enduring, indeed timeless value, a classification which squares with a set of familiar discourses about culture and the literary, the Penguin and Everyman editions also strongly propose the classic as an object of study in formal educational situations, a definition which includes inscribing essay writing conventions into the edition and which the student

reader is presumed to follow. This suggests a horizon of the publishable which in part overlaps with the Folio, but which can also be differentiated: the Penguin and Everyman classics series are strongly shaped by higher educational institutions and practices. This marked and distinctive classification of the text as an object of formal study is suggestive of the ways in which publishing practices and the specific horizon of the publishable shape discursive and therefore interpretative and reading possibilities. Translation and topicalisation likewise exemplify the discursive, including textual, character of knowledge. Translation from one language into another can effect a discursive shift which in turn may alter (as well as vary the strength) of inferential possibilities. An analysis of translative practices demonstrates how discourses are inscribed in genres and registers, inscribed in the textual, as well as in the distinctive logics and patterns of inference that particular discourses make possible and probable. The topicalisation of texts, concepts and arguments, their formulation as particular questions and problems, and their situation within particular intertextual formations, not only reveals the always-already discursive character of knowledge but the ways in which certain patterns of argument and inference can become established, indeed fixed procedures. The alignment of 'contemporary literary theory' with a valorised new in a narrative of modernity is just such a topos within the meta-discourse of theory. And as demonstrated in chapter six, its frequently elliptical representation assumes and/or demands knowledge of this argument (with its consequent devaluing of tradition and 'the past'). In more general terms, the distinctive characteristics of the meta-discourse of theory - its difficulty (including an identified cultural difficulty), its challenge to established orthodoxies, its modernity and so on - are fundamentally (though not exclusively) shaped by the horizon of the publishable, marked by the particular contents and contradictions of accessibility and coverage. This in turn suggests a way of developing genre as a concept. Classics and Literary Theory textbooks can both be conceived as genres in the sense that they constitute a distinctive and (increasingly) institutionalised pattern of intertextual relations and practices, including a dominant operating discourse. They are both genres which are shaped by fundamental tensions or contradictions; in the case of classics these centre on what a classic is, in the case of Literary Theory textbooks these centre on the knowledges of the prescribed reader. The two case-studies also demonstrate very clearly how it is the relations between the totality of publishing practices that constitute genre. This is particularly strongly marked because there is a sharp dissonance between compositional practice and editing (and marketing) practices in each case. In both cases, a close rhetorical analysis makes it possible to identify in very precise terms the reading practices that a genre (conceived in this way) proposes.

Classics and Literary Theory textbooks conceived as genres in this expanded sense strongly suggest particular and highly distinctive practices of interpretation, explication

and evaluation. In the case of classics, literary interpretation is a practice which translates 'story' and 'literal' meaning into a set of aesthetic, moral, social and/or political preoccupations and values. This formal practice of interpretation and consequent injunction to the prescribed reader remains constant across the divergences of interpretation between and within editions. It is predicated on the assumption of the text's value which is variously inscribed, for example, in the ways in which editorial authority is figured, and in the endnotes, which, taken as a general discourse, are proposed as a procedure that the text merits or deserves. The intertexts which the classic edition proposes as pertinent and indeed necessary to interpretation, whether this takes the form of a discourse of moral critique (Conrad) or of contemporaneous discourses of gender (Jones), are finally governed and delimited by an assumption about the text's value. But the reader's presumed relation to these intertexts can be markedly different, with consequences for the interpretative process. Conrad's introduction 'reminds' the reader of a set of discourses which they are assumed to know already (or 'should' know), knowledge which the reader must mobilise; Jones's historicist reading makes no such claim: seeking rather to supply the reader with the knowledges s/he lacks. In the case of Literary Theory textbooks, reading 'Theory' is conceived in significant part as the construction of a particular set of intertextual relations. 'Theory' is never just a group of texts, concepts and arguments; it is also a set of narratives (for example, the British reception of theory), genealogies (Saussure as the origin of contemporary theory), thematics (writing gender) and topics. Reading is proposed as a construction of a certain order which itself delimits interpretative possibilities, and where 'order' suggests both an explanatory sequence, and a hierarchy which accords differential values to particular texts and discourses. These explicatory and evaluative modalities of reading shape interpretation, in that the translative 'making sense' of a particular text, concept or argument is always governed by its place within a particular order of reading which the textbook proposes as the legitimate logic of the field. This in turn raises questions about the interpretative processes, here the differences between mobilising knowledge and producing it within an interpretative procedure. And given the conflict between accessibility and coverage, the intertextualities that the interpretation of Theory requires is both, and sometimes simultaneously, a deficit which must be made good within the text, and an assumption which can therefore be elided. These instances of translative practices help to specify the definition of interpretation as translation proposed in chapter four. In both classics and Literary Theory textbooks it is acknowledged that the prescribed reader may not or probably does not know at least some of the languages that interpretation depends on. And translation is, at least in part, a productive way of formulating interpretation because it draws attention to the fundamental role of knowledge in an interpretative

process conceived as both intertextual and inferential. Indeed one useful way of conceiving many implicated meanings might be as translations.

This attempt to explain why despite multiple interpretative possibilities, some interpretations are far more probable than others should not be conflated with an attempt to treat interpretation as a process of pragmatic resolution. First, because the multiple and frequently conflictual possibilities remain, they do not vanish or 'wither away'. Second because all these possibilities are contingent, and while some are indeed far more probable than others, no interpretation is necessary. This refusal to treat interpretation as pragmatic resolution is strongly marked in the ways that the mode of analysis makes it possible to identify the contradictions which govern the practices of both publishing categories. In the case of classics, the contradiction between the universally legible that is the most definitive marker of the classic's value and the opacities which the editional apparatus seeks to clarify; in the case of Literary Theory textbooks, the contradiction between reader-oriented accessibility and a conception of coverage which is authored and sanctioned by the field. These conflicts, which are central to the production practices of each publishing category and the interpretative possibilities which follow from them, suggest not only the impossibility of interpretation conceived as resolution, but once more demonstrate the need to take account of publishing practices as part of a properly rhetorical account of interpretation. To take just one example, the practices of topicalisation and translation each constitute a distinguishable writing and reading subject and a distinctive relation between them. Co-occurring, even in the same sentence, they render the pragmatic division between speaker and spoken and, more specifically, Relevance's account of the speaker who chooses a stimulus which best suits their estimation of the hearer, not only simplistic but inadequate. Which speaker, which hearer ?

As I suggested at the beginning of these remarks, interpretative possibilities are rich, yet in contrast, and for the most part, interpretations are few and sparse. Intertextual theories of production offer the most plausible account of the character of these possibilities and how they arise, and, in the process, demonstrate the limits of the richness that inferential theories predict. Yet, inferential theories by positing inferencing as an interpretative process, attempt to specify it, which intertextual theories of reception do not, except in negative terms (reading is <u>not</u> decoding). To argue that interpretation is a substantially inferential process is not, as I have shown, a simple matter of leasing a component of pragmatic theory, as an unmodified adjunct or support to an intertextual theory of interpretation. First, because intertextual accounts can demonstrate that what governs patterns and possibilities of inference is textual form, the relations between languages and discourses and not a general communicative or cognitive principle. Second, because intertextual theories, in formulating the process of meaning as transformation and, I would want to underline, variation, make

any act of interpretation one which must register and work with both similarity and difference, and such a process cannot be adequately explained as a process of 'recoding'. Intertextual theories of reception correctly argue that the reading process involves a situating of the text being read in a particular intertextual formation, but without an account of inferencing it is not possible to explain how a particular intertextual conjunction might 'become' a particular interpretation. Both intertextual and inferential theories open up the range and character of interpretative possibilities, but interpretation as event and process is neither the sum total of these, nor the local resolution of many into one in a particular here-and-now. Inferential theories and pragmatic theories more generally are correct to specify interpretation as centrally a process of delimiting or 'thinning' interpretative possibilities. But both traditions fail to identify the ways in certain possibilities are more probable than others, and the many practices which delimit and fix meaning. Most starkly, both traditions are blind to the delimiting role of the processes and practices of publishing and the horizon of the publishable. To specify the interpretative process requires both a narrowing and an expanding of focus. It must be narrow enough to capture the detail of interpretative processes, but this narrowness cannot be reduced to a technical procedure. For the terms in which the interpretative process must be specified, terms which take account of texts and the intertextual, the edition, readers, context, and reading as process and practice in the terms elaborated must constitute interpretation as an attempt to fix meaning which is always governed by social and cultural relations.

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[1] The exception to this is Kristeva's 'semiotic' which does introduce an unpredictable and strictly uncoded dimension into signification. But although the semiotic is not wholly subject to language as Law, it is governed by the logics of the psychic economy.

[2] The 'now' marks the modification that is made in the second edition of *Relevance*. See the discussion of how the theory has been modified in chapter two.

[3] This example is discussed in detail in chapter six, pp.277-278.

[4] This example is discussed in detail in chapter six, pp.274-6

Appendix A

Photocopies of:

1. Everyman *Pride and Prejudice* (1993) cover.

2. Folio *Pride and Prejudice* (1957/75) cover.

3. Folio *Pride and Prejudice* (1957) sample illustration, page 19.

4. Penguin *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) cover.

5. Penguin *Pride and Prejudice* (1996) cover.

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